

CHILDREN AND FAMILIES: OUR NATION'S PRIORITY

HEARING

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON

CHILDREN, FAMILY, DRUGS AND ALCOHOLISM

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON

LABOR AND HUMAN RESOURCES

UNITED STATES SENATE

ONE HUNDRED SECOND CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

ON

EXAMINING THE STATE OF THE AMERICAN FAMILY, FOCUSING ON
CHILDREN'S HEALTH, CHILD WELFARE REFORM, EARLY CHILDHOOD
DEVELOPMENT, AND STATE AND LOCAL PROGRAMS DESIGNED TO
AID WORKING PARENTS

JANUARY 16, 1991

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CHILDREN AND FAMILIES: OUR NATION'S PRIORITY

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 16, 1991

U.S. SENATE,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON CHILDREN, FAMILY, DRUGS AND
ALCOHOLISM, OF THE COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND HUMAN
RESOURCES,
Washington, DC.

The subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:08 a.m., in room SD-430, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Senator Christopher J. Dodd (chairman of the subcommittee) presiding.

Present: Senators Dodd, Pell, and Hatch.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR DODD

Senator DODD. The subcommittee will come to order.

I'd like to welcome all of you here this morning for the first of a two-part series of hearings on children and families. Our first hearing today will focus on families in the 1990's; tomorrow's hearing will discuss policies to strengthen families. This follows, of course, yesterday's hearing by the Full Committee on Labor and Human Resources, conducted by Senator Kennedy, looking at the broad range of issues affecting children and families in the 1990's.

At any rate, today we begin work for the 102nd Congress with a set of hearings on the status of the American family in the 1990's and Federal policies to strengthen it.

The crisis in the Persian Gulf is rightfully foremost in our thoughts today, but much as we must marshal all efforts toward a peaceful and just resolution there, we cannot in the meantime turn away from the daunting challenges that we face right here at home.

Despite the surface prosperity, the 1980's were a tough decade for American families. Caught in an economic vise of declining real income and rising costs for basic necessities, families sent more members into the work force, took on more debt, and went without health insurance or home ownership. Poverty rates increased, especially among one-fifth of the children who today live below the poverty line.

Middle-income families worked longer and sacrificed more just to stay even. Since average wages dropped 9 percent over the last decade, families kept up only by sending mothers with children into the work force. On average, each parent in a two-earner family works 3 weeks more every year than he or she used to. A

down payment on a house now costs 50 percent of average annual income, up from 33 percent in 1978.

Similarly, a year at a private college costs \$14,000, up from \$8,000 in 1967. The American dream of home ownership and a college education for your children slips further and further away.

Profound changes in family structure have occurred as well. Almost three-quarters of children live in two-parent families. The most common family arrangement is for both parents to be in the labor force. Forty-two percent of children live in this arrangement, while 29 percent live in the traditional "Ozzie and Harriet" family. Over the decade, children living with one parent has increased from 20 percent to 24 percent, in large part because of the decline of long-term marriage. Divorce rates have stabilized since the 1970's, but at very high levels. Nearly one million children see their parents divorced every year.

Pressures on families are taking a very severe toll. We see many signs that families are in crisis—child abuse, spousal violence, alcohol and substance abuse, entry into foster care, and teen suicide are all on the rise. More subtle, but equally alarming, are studies that show greater difficulties in school and other facets of life experienced by children from disrupted families.

Despite these challenges, I believe that this decade and the next century hold greater promise for the American family than ever before. Our Nation possesses great economic resources, if only these resources can be directed toward the well-being of our Nation's children and their families.

We know what works. We have proven time and time again that early investment in health and education of children pays off tremendously over the long run. In communities across this country, programs that work have emerged. The bonds and caring traditionally provided by the immediate family are being supplemented, not replaced, but supplemented and strengthened by extended families and neighborhood-based services. Communities have found new ways to protect their most fragile families.

Similarly at the national level, the goal of supporting America's families cuts across partisan lines. In the last Congress we found broad support for policies to help children—a landmark new Federal program for child care; expansion of Head Start; the expansion of Medicaid for poor children. In this Congress, we can build on that foundation and develop other innovative policies to help families help themselves.

Government policy, and society in general, must put children and families first.

First, we must do more to keep the family together—through family preservation programs and through changes in divorce law which emphasize children's needs.

Second, we must provide better income support for at-risk families—by changes in tax policies for families with children and a child support system that assures benefits high enough to avoid poverty.

Third, we must provide greater assistance for balancing work and family—through a national family leave policy and workplace programs like job-sharing and on-site child care.

Finally, we must strengthen public investments for our future—through full funding for existing programs, better coordination of services for families, and adequate and secure funding over the long run, perhaps through a children's trust fund.

Inherent in this approach is the notion that we must look at the family as a whole. We cannot claim to help the family through one policy while cutting back on assistance in another area. For this reason, I also intend to propose a short list of key indicators of the well-being of children and families, set goals for improvements in those areas, and hold ourselves accountable over the years.

There can be no greater priority for our Nation than to strengthen families—all families. In their hands lies our survival today and for generations to come.

[Prepared statement of Senator Dodd follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SENATOR DODD

Welcome to the Subcommittee on Children, Family, Drugs and Alcoholism. Today, we begin our work for the 102nd Congress with a set of hearings on the status of the American family in the 1990's and Federal policies to strengthen families. The crisis in the Persian Gulf is rightfully foremost in our thoughts today. But much as we must marshal all efforts toward a peaceful and just resolution there, we cannot in the meantime turn away from the daunting challenges we face right here at home.

Despite the surface prosperity, the 1980's were a tough decade for American families. Caught in an economic vise of declining real income and rising costs for basic necessities, families sent more members into the work force, took on more debt, and went without health insurance or home ownership. Poverty rates increased, especially among the one-fifth of children who today live below the poverty line.

Middle-income families worked longer and sacrificed more just to stay even. Since average wages dropped 9 percent over the last decade, families kept up only by sending mothers with children into the workforce. On average, each parent in a two-earner family works 3 weeks more every year than he or she used to. A down payment on a house now costs 50 percent of average annual income, up from 33 percent in 1978. Similarly, a year at a private college costs \$14,000, up from \$8,000 in 1967. The American dream of home ownership and a college education for the children slips further and further away.

Profound changes in family structure have occurred as well. Almost three-quarter of children live in two-parent families. The most common family arrangement is for both parents to be in the labor force. Forty-two percent of children live in this arrangement, while 29 percent live in the traditional Ozzie and Harriet family. Over the decade, children living with one parent have increased from 20 percent to 24 percent, in large part because of the decline of long-term marriage. Divorce rates have stabilized since the 1970's, but at very high levels—nearly a million children see their parents divorced every year.

The pressures on families are taking a severe toll. We see many signs that families are in crisis—child abuse, spousal violence, alco-

hol and substance abuse, entry into foster care, and teen suicide are all on the rise. More subtle, but equally alarming, are studies that show greater difficulties in school and in other facets of life experienced by children from disrupted families.

Despite these challenges, I believe that this decade and the next century hold greater promise for the family than ever before. Our Nation possesses great economic resources, if only these resources can be directed toward the well-being of our Nation's children. We know what works. We have proven time and time again that early investment in health and education of children pays off tremendously over the long run. In communities across the country, programs that work have emerged. The bonds and caring traditionally provided by the immediate family are being supplemented and strengthened by extended families and neighborhood-based services. Communities have found new ways to protect their most fragile families.

Similarly, at the national level, the goal of supporting America's families cuts across partisan lines. In the last Congress we found broad support for policies to help children: a landmark new Federal program for child care, expansion of Head Start, and expansion of Medicaid for poor children. In this Congress, we can build on that foundation and develop other innovative policies to help families help themselves.

Government policy—and society in general—must put children and families first. First, we must do more to keep the family together—through family preservation programs and through changes in divorce law which emphasize children needs. Second, we must provide better income support for at-risk families—through changes in tax policies for families with children and a child support system that assures benefits high enough to avoid poverty. Third, we must provide greater assistance for balancing work and family—through a national family leave policy and workplace programs like job sharing and on-site child care. Finally, we must strengthen public investments for the future—through full funding for existing programs, better coordination of services for families, and adequate and secure funding over the long run, perhaps through a Children's Trust Fund.

Inherent in this approach is the notion that we must look at the family as a whole. We cannot claim to help the family through one policy while cutting back on assistance in another area. For this reason, I also intend to propose a short list of key indicators of the well-being of children and families, set goals for improvements in those areas, and hold ourselves accountable over the years.

There can be no greater priority for our Nation than to strengthen families—all families. In their hands lies our survival today and for generations to come.

I am delighted today to have with me Senator Orrin Hatch, the ranking minority member of the Full Labor Committee. Since this is our first time together in a formal setting as we begin the 102nd Congress, let me repeat what I said at the close of the last Congress, and that is that we would never have had a child care bill, would never have been able to accomplish what we did with Head Start or Medicaid without his help and support. There are a lot of people who can claim their involvement and support, and we ap-

preciate it immensely. But we were only able to achieve those results because Orrin Hatch decided it was important and waded in and made it possible.

So for public record again let me say to him what I have said to him in private over and over again, and that is my deep appreciation and thanks for his commitment to American families and their children. It is a pleasure to have you here this morning.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR HATCH

Senator HATCH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate those kind remarks. Everybody knows the tremendous effort that you put forth in these areas, especially on child care. There were a lot of people who did not think we would get a child care bill last year. We not only got one, but we got legislation that everybody can be proud of. But, it is only the beginning toward solving some of these problems.

I don't know of a greater problem in America today than the problems that beset our families. We all have different ideas on what will be the best approaches to take—some of them are great ideas, some of them are less great. But the fact is that everybody on this Labor and Human Resources Committee is committed to trying to do what is best and in the best interest of American families.

So I am very pleased that you are holding these hearings. I also want to congratulate you, Mr. Chairman, for the outstanding witnesses that you have here today. I would like to welcome each and every one of you and express my appreciation for the efforts that you are putting forth.

Ms. Harper, we have watched you through the years and have great admiration for you. I have watched what you have done for the homeless and for others in so many different ways, and it means a great deal to us to have you here this morning representing RESULTS.

I am on the Intelligence Committee, and I can't stay very long, so I hope you will all forgive me for having to leave. But I just wanted to come and pay my respects to the chairman and to each of you. I am very interested in these issues and want to do as much as I can to cooperate with my chairman here and further the work of those who really come up with ideas that are beneficial for the families in this country.

So thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator DODD. Thank you, Orrin, and we've got a terrific agenda for you this Congress, too.

Senator HATCH. Yes, I understand.

Senator DODD. Are you getting nervous?

Senator HATCH. I came from the last Congress nervous. [Laughter.]

Senator DODD. By the way, I have sent around in the audience and to the press tables copies of the Family Report Card Chart. I can't read the chart from here, myself, and I'm sure you can't, but these indicators range from low birth-weight children down to children living with one family and examine statistically what has happened since 1960 in these areas. Generally, I would tell you

that the charts indicate some improvements in a number of areas. There is a tendency to say everything is getting worse and worse, but it is really not. In some areas there have been some real improvements—for instance, in low birth-weight babies; it is fairly static, but it hasn't dropped as people might have assumed. And children graduating from high school actually is a little bit better, not much, by about three percentage points from where we were in 1960. The one statistic that, maybe more than anything else, shows you what has happened is children in poverty. In 1960, almost 27 percent were living in poverty, and in 1970, as a result of the war on poverty, that number dropped by almost 10 percent, where down to 15 percent of our children were living in poverty in 1970. The 1970's were sort of static, in 1980 it remained at 18 percent. It is now back up to 20.6 percent in 1987. So you can see that number has risen from 1970 to 1987.

The other one I'd mention to you is children living with one parent, because that will highlight a reason why we have had so many difficulties in a lot of areas. In 1960, 9.1 percent of children were living with one parent only. In 1987, it is almost one in four, or 25 percent. So that is the most dramatic increase.

But I would draw your attention to all those numbers. What we intend to do is to keep this up and remind people of where we are headed in these basic areas.

I am delighted to welcome our first witness here this morning in these 2 days of hearings. She is obviously someone who is very well-known because of her remarkable accomplishments as an actor. But she is here today primarily because of her involvement and concern with children, dating back over a decade and a half. Not just as someone who shows up to help, which many people do, and we applaud them for doing that—it will help draw attention to a particular issue—but as someone who has waded in over and over and over again on one matter after another affecting children, both here at home and abroad.

She is a member of the board of directors of RESULTS; the co-founder of LIFE, which stands for a program called "Love is Feeding Everyone," a program that feeds 100,000 people in the Los Angeles area every, single week. Valerie Harper can claim initial involvement and sponsorship of that particular effort.

She has been involved in the United Nations World Summit on Children, where she did a tremendous job in focusing attention on this particular area. She has worked on The Hunger Project; the 1989 Housing Now march, in this city; and has been deeply involved with Save the Children for years.

So we are delighted to welcome you here, in one capacity as a well-known performer, but more importantly, if I might say because of your commitment and your involvement and your dedication to children and families and because you bring us first-hand knowledge of what needs to be done in this country if we are going to continue the progress we have seen in some areas and make life even better for what Governor Lawton Chiles called "the farm team of America" yesterday, which I think was a wonderful analogy.

So we are delighted to welcome you here this morning, and we'll be delighted to receive your testimony, and then we'll get to some questions.

**STATEMENT OF VALERIE HARPER, BOARD MEMBER, RESULTS,
AND CO-FOUNDER, LIFE, LOS ANGELES, CA**

Ms. HARPER. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

I am honored and privileged to be here. To be invited to testify before this subcommittee is I think a wonderful opportunity, and I treasure it.

Many people do know me as an actress. You have already talked about my activities. The Hunger Project was my entry point, 13, 14 years ago. And the fact that 75 percent of the hunger deaths around the world are little children tragically makes hunger very much a children's issue.

Hunger Project is an organization that is committed to ending hunger, globally, by the turn of the century. And I have worked very hard with Sam Harris of RESULTS for the World Summit for Children Candlelight Vigils.

Serving on the board of RESULTS, I have been very pleased to hear that the lobbying effort of RESULTS is pound-for-pound one of the most powerful lobbies in DC because of the commitment of the people. And I think that is what these hearings, and you having them at this time, with this urgency, is what the call is to the American people—to take care of our own, to realize that what we do makes a difference.

The idea that it is at the beginning is extremely important. What the World Summit for Children stated, that children must come first, first call for children, is in fact what you are doing—before the State of the Union Message, before the 102nd really gets rolling, here you are with what I feel is the most important issue domestically and globally, which is the resource of children being protected in their very survival and their development.

That is the issue, that children must come first—and yet, we know they don't. Hundreds of thousands of children who are homeless in America don't come first. The two million abused or neglected children don't come first. The children whose parents are addicted to drugs or alcohol don't come first. And the 12 million American children who have no health insurance, no health coverage, do not come first. Also, the one out of five American children living in poverty don't come first. We all know that they should.

The uncertainty in the Middle East will only put the children farther behind, and we must do everything we can to make sure that that doesn't happen. In fact, today's hearing is quite stunning in its stand for children. In the middle of a time when our attention is elsewhere, we are taking a stand for children because, as you said earlier, our issues go on; the work must go on. And what better time, because the children of war-torn areas or where war is threatened—the children of Los Angeles, which sometimes appear to be a war zone, where the driveby shootings become pedestrian—you read about it every day; every day the LA Times has something about a driveby shooting—those issues of children in special circumstances. The World Summit for Children made promises

about those children. So this is a perfect occasion that we take the stand for kids.

We have a unique opportunity this year as a result of the Summit, which was held in September—and that Summit meeting, by the way, was absolutely unprecedented. President Bush attended the Summit with other presidents, prime ministers and kings, who numbered in all 71, along with delegations from over 80 other countries. They agreed to more than 20 goals for the health and well-being of children in the 1990's and beyond.

At the time of the Summit, the Bush Administration announced specific health goals for America's children, to be achieved by the year 2000. Among these were the reduction of infant mortality to no more than 7 deaths per 1,000 live births from the current level, which is somewhere at 6.8, and is much worse in inner cities and poverty areas.

The low birth-weight, which is in your Family Report Card of America, is really shocking—we are 29th in the world in low birth-weight babies. Now, that means that 28 other countries, other than the United States of America, have a better record on prenatal care, on supporting young women who are pregnant so that their babies are born at the proper weight. As I said, the inner city conditions are much, much worse. In fact, in parts of Washington, DC and Los Angeles, it is a lot riskier for a baby to be born than in some Third World countries.

The goals set by the Bush Administration are absolutely, totally reachable. Most of these child deaths are absolutely preventable.

I cannot stress that too strongly, and you must hear this. Most of the American child deaths are absolutely preventable. The means of prevention are both available and absolutely affordable. What is missing is the will to get it done. These hearings are a good start in generating that will.

In the year 2000, I want it to be a fact that the United States of America had the vision and the commitment to seize the opportunity of the World Summit for Children, and that we made our Nation a world leader in children's well-being. Congress needs to demonstrate foresight to fund some of the excellent initiatives it has authorized.

The Young Americans Act—wonderful—is not funded yet. Experts estimate that there are as many as 2 million abused and neglected children in this country. It is intolerable that these children are not receiving the services that they need and deserve.

I want to mention two programs that I believe are absolutely essential in our fight against child hunger and poverty, and even though the funding for those programs is not specifically addressed by this subcommittee, it certainly is in the ball park of concern.

WIC, which is the supplemental food program for women, infants and children, could help enormously in saving lives; yet it serves only about half the eligible mothers and their children. Congress and the President ought to commit to expanding the availability of WIC over the next few years, aiming at full participation by the mid-1990's, and come up with the money to do so.

Another great, effective, proven-to-be-fantastic program—and of course, with your leadership on it—is Head Start. One of the education goals announced by President Bush last year says: "By the

year 2000 every American child will enter school ready to learn." There is no way we can reach that goal if needy preschoolers cannot get into Head Start and get the services there. It is a shame that only one-third of the children who should be enrolled in Head Start have access to it or will be in the program this year at all.

So your full committee authorized expanding the program to serve all the eligible poor preschoolers by 1994, and that is wonderful, but Congress now needs to appropriate the money.

At the risk of seeming maybe rude, which I have no intention of being, I want to quote a very courageous and forthright doctor who speaks of Congress in her statement. This is Dr. Deborah Frank, Director of Growth and Development at Boston City Hospital. She talks very straight, and I like straight talk, especially when it serves to wake us up to what is essential for children.

Dr. Frank says: "Kids' brains can't wait for dad to get a new job or for the Congress to come back from recess. Why can't public policymakers see the connection between bad infant nutrition, which is cheap and easy to fix, and developmental problems, which are extremely expensive and often difficult, if not impossible, to fix?"

I know I am preaching to the choir, the already-committed. I am really well aware of that—in fact you are our leader on this. I also know that a number of these issues don't fall under the committee's jurisdiction. But we all, elected officials and ordinary citizens alike, need to find our role as advocates for our children. Parents or not, they are our children, and we need to be advocates for their future.

We the committed need to redouble our lobbying, lobbying our colleagues—I am going to go back and lobby Hollywood like crazy, and you take care of the Senate—and of course, everybody we meet, beyond just our immediate colleagues. Everyone has a constituency, and we must reach out and find a way.

Actually, last, I want to say that this issue of children's well-being is not yet as prominent in the eyes of the media and the public as say, for instance, the important cause of protecting our environment. But Americans are really starting to wake up to the urgency of this issue of the well-being of children because, like the environment, without children, without either, we have no future.

Proof of it was that one-quarter of a million Americans participated in the candlelight vigils before the World Summit, and they did that on short notice; they galvanized, they lit candles, they took a stand for kids, globally. And certainly in America, we lose 36,000 children a year in our country due to completely preventable causes—a 13-cent measles shot, hunger, water, sanitary conditions. This must be changed immediately, and America is in a better position to do it.

That is the challenge, and I hope it will be boldly and powerfully answered by the actions of Congress this year. There is not a moment to lose; as we have been talking, little lives are slipping away, and we need to stand for our Nation's most vulnerable citizens.

It is apparent that you have that sense of urgency for helping children quickly in the face of this crisis. I called your staff member Jackie Ruff on Monday from Beverly Hills and said, "Gee, is the hearing on?" and she said, "Oh, yes, absolutely." So I just

want to spotlight that, that this is laying the groundwork for work that is going to continue, and we all have to just stick with it in terms of putting children first.

The very last thing I want to share with you is a wonderful poem that most poignantly and succinctly, in just a few lines, expresses this issue of urgency and what is needed for kids. The poem is by the Nobel Prize-winning poet from Chile, Gabriella Mistral, and this is what she writes: "We are guilty of many errors, of many faults, but our worst crime is abandoning the children, neglecting the fountain of life. Many of the things we need can wait, but the child cannot. Right now is the time bones are being formed, blood is being made, and senses are being developed. To children we cannot answer tomorrow; the child's name is today."

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, for your extraordinary leadership for years, not just this committee, but for always, you have been in there on behalf of children and families, medical leave, and human services reauthorization, the Children of Substance Abusers Act that you worked so hard to achieve. I just hope your colleagues in Congress and my fellow brother and sister Americans get on the stick for our children and support what we need to do as a country for our kids.

So it has been a wonderful opportunity. Thank you for affording me this chance to share my views with you.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Harper follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF VALERIE HARPER

Mr. Chairman, thank you for inviting me to testify before the subcommittee today. While most people know me as an actress, I have long been concerned and active on children's issues. Recently, I served as a U.S. Celebrity Co-Chair of the World Summit for Children Candlelight Vigils. The vigils took place on September 23, 1990, one week before the Summit, at more than 500 sites in the United States and in 74 other countries. I serve on the board of RESULTS an international citizens' lobby dedicated to creating the political will to end hunger and I am co-founder, with Dennis Weaver, of LIFE (Love is Feeding Everyone).

I want to thank and acknowledge you, Mr. chairman, and the other members of this committee for holding these hearings. With these hearings at the beginning of the Congressional session you are saying something we all know to be true—you are saying, "the children must come first."

And yet we know that they don't. The hundreds of thousands of children who are homeless in America don't come first; the 2 million abused or neglected children don't come first; the children whose parents are addicted to drugs or alcohol don't come first; the 12 million American children who have no health insurance don't come first and the one out of five American children living in poverty don't come first. But we all know that they should.

The uncertainty in the Middle East will only put the children farther behind. We must do everything we can to make sure that it doesn't.

We have a unique opportunity this year as a result of the World Summit for Children held last September. The meeting was absolutely unprecedented. The message was—"first call for children." President Bush was there with 70 other presidents, prime ministers and kings along with delegations from over 80 other countries. They agreed to more than 20 goals for the health and well-being of children in the 1990's and beyond.

At the time of the Summit, the Bush administration announced year 2000 health goals for America's children such as reducing infant mortality to no more than 7 per 1,000 live births from the current level of 10.4, and reducing the incidence of low birthweight infants to 5 percent or less from the current level of 6.8 percent, by the year 2000. Right now we are 29th in the world in low birthweight babies. That means that 28 other countries have a better record than we do. In our inner cities, conditions are a lot worse. It's riskier for a baby to be born in parts of Washington, DC, or Los Angeles than in many Third World countries. But the goals set by the

Bush administration are totally reachable. Most American child deaths are absolutely preventable.

In the year 2000, I want to be able to say that the United States had the vision and the commitment to seize the opportunity of the World Summit for Children, and that we made our Nation a world leader in children's well-being. Congress needs to demonstrate foresight to fund some of the excellent initiatives it has authorized. The Young American's Act isn't funded yet. Experts estimate that there are as many as 2 million abused and neglected children in this country. It is intolerable that these children are not receiving the services they need.

I want to mention two programs that I believe are a central part of our fight against child hunger and poverty, even though the funding for these programs is not specifically addressed by this subcommittee. The WIC program could help enormously in saving lives, yet it still serves only about half of the eligible mothers and children. Congress and the President ought to commit to expanding the availability of WIC over the next few years, aiming at full participation by the mid-1990's, and come up with the money to do it.

Another great program is Head Start. One of the education goals announced by President Bush last year says, "By the year 2000, every American child will enter school ready to learn." There is no way we can reach that goal if needy preschoolers can't get Head Start's comprehensive services. It's a shame that only about one third of the kids who should be enrolled in Head Start will be in the program this year. Your full committee authorized expanding the program to serve all of the eligible poor preschoolers by 1994. That's great, but now Congress needs to appropriate the money.

At the risk of seeming rude, which I have no intention of being, I'd like to quote Dr. Deborah Frank, director of growth and development at Boston City Hospital. She talks straight and I like straight talk, especially when it serves to waken us to what is essential for children. She said "Kid's brains can't wait for dad to get a new job or for Congress to come back from recess. Why can't public policy makers see the connection between bad infant nutrition, which is cheap and easy to fix, and developmental problems, which are expensive and often difficult to fix?"

I know I'm preaching to the choir—the already committed. I know that a number of these issues don't fall under your committee's jurisdiction—but we must all—elected officials and ordinary citizens alike—we must all find our role as advocates for children—advocates for our future.

Last, let me just say that I know that the issue of children's well-being is not yet as prominent in the eyes of the media and public as, say, the important cause of protecting our environment. But Americans are starting to wake up to the urgency of the issue of the well-being of children both here and abroad. Over a quarter of a million Americans participated in Candlelight Vigils before the World Summit for Children precisely to show that they care and they want real action, not just rhetoric. This is a challenge which I hope will be boldly and powerfully answered by the actions of the Congress this year.

Mr. Chairman, thank you very much for your leadership on child care, family and medical leave, the human services reauthorization and children of substance abusers act and thank you for letting me share my views with you.

Senator DODD. Thank you, very, very much, Ms. Harper, for your eloquence today and for your work over the years on these particular issues.

A couple of things occur to me. I noticed in your remarks a real emphasis on the health and nutrition aspects—you have been involved with LIFE, which is a basic food program, and you mentioned the WIC programs—as sort of the beginning point. I wonder if you might share with us why the particular emphasis on that aspect of it.

Ms. HARPER. Well, the thing that I hold in my heart about what we need to do for children is a triumvirate, a three-pronged thing—it is survival, protection, development. And to protect them and then for them to have education and grow up to be the citizens that they need to be, number one, is survival. Children are dying from lack of food at an alarming rate around the world. In fact, globally, half or more of child deaths are hunger-related. And of all

the hunger-related deaths, starvation and chronic under-nutrition—actually, the starvation and the things we saw on the news during the Ethiopian famine crisis, that is only 10 percent of hunger deaths; 90 percent is this thing called “chronic under-nutrition” where over a period of time when it is terribly needed, food is not there. That is happening to American children right now.

So food and nutrition and health services. Oftentimes a death certificate will say “measles” and the underlying cause was hunger or dehydration—and diarrhea is the cause of death for just millions of children. It is quite extraordinary when there is a 10-cent packet called oral rehydration therapy—that is 10 cents, and it is an incredible medical breakthrough. That can be applied instead of an i.v.; you give this to the children orally, and they are rehydrated long enough to get food in.

So health and nutrition—and I know in Boston this has been spoken about for a long time, and Jonathan Cozal and others have talked about children coming to school numb with hunger so they can’t learn—so I think nutrition and health are quite basic—and their environment. The children’s credo is that you transform the child’s environment; therefore children in drug-infested areas, or with parents who are addicted to alcohol or drugs, are at tremendous risk because they maybe don’t get their food because of their parents’ habit. So food and nutrition and health are quite basic for me; you have got to get them to survive, then you’ve got to get them to thrive, and you need to protect this all the way along the line, and development, of course, is their chance to end the cycle of poverty so they don’t live as their parents live, and they do get a chance, and they have hope to get out of that. But I think food is quite basic.

Senator DODD. I agree with you—

Ms. HARPER. Did I answer your question? I went rambling on.

Senator DODD. No, you did, absolutely. There are so many of these things we talk about, and I think we need to try and sort it out a little bit in our own minds so we have a clear understanding of where we’re trying to end up in all of this.

I mentioned Senator Hatch earlier, and obviously we take great pride in the fact that we were finally able to achieve a national child care policy in this country. Having said that, I would also quickly tell you that in some ways, as much as I am pleased with the legislative results, it is sort of a tragic commentary—the fact that we have reached a point where two out of every three women with families in the work force are there because they are the sole providers of their families who have husbands who earn less than \$15,000 a year. So it is not a question of a group of yuppies trying to buy another Volvo or something; we are talking here about people who absolutely have to do it.

Ms. HARPER. That’s right.

Senator DODD. And the question is what do they do with their children if there are not relatives, or grandma and grandpa living nextdoor. You try and come up with the best possible environment that you can for the children.

We will hear shortly from some witnesses who will tell you how many hours a week their children are in the care of virtual strangers, who are qualified, but nonetheless strangers.

So as I say, I'm proud of the fact that we were able to get the legislation accomplished, but I am saddened that we have to move in that direction because there is not the opportunity for parenting, where children can be under the ideal situation with a parent or with their parents.

And the pressures are mounting. I mentioned earlier this incredible leap from 9 percent to around 25 percent of the number of children who are growing up in single-parent homes and all of the problems that that poses.

You come from an industry—if there is any industry more stressful than yours, it is mine. Divorce rates among politicians—I don't know what the actual number is, but they are high—you are looking at one; I didn't have children, but nonetheless, I am a statistic in that sense. And certainly, the acting profession has to fall into the category of being one of the most stressful.

What are the stresses on families? Do you have any thoughts or comments on what sorts of pressures are occurring in these families that are creating this kind of situation and some ideas possibly on how we can begin to turn this thing around a little bit.

Ms. HARPER. It seems like the economic pressures—as you said, it is not women choosing to stay home and eat bonbons and watch television or maybe saying, “I think I'll become a designer.” Most American women are working for the same reason men work—to survive, to put food on the table. I think times have changed, the economic climate has changed, and a lot of our old beliefs and mythology have not. So there hasn't been what families need.

The leave bill which passed through Congress—I was quite disappointed when President Bush vetoed that because it seemed such an extraordinarily smart and compassionate and appropriate thing to put into effect—in fact, we stand alone in the West in the industrialized countries that don't have that kind of program, as France does, and Sweden and everyone else. The family has to be supported to stay together because the old paradigm, as you said, of “Ozzie and Harriet”, really is not the norm, and yet we sort of tend to think it is or wish for it.

I think what we are going through now could come out the other end as a marvelous, marvelous thing for the family, with shared parenthood, where dad would be more a parent than he has ever been before, more a participant; where parenthood would be a partnership, not mom's deal to do, and “I'll go out and fight in the jungle.” It is almost economic reality that has forced it, but it also smacks of an opportunity. I know it is a challenge, and I know it is a problem, but in there—I'm one of those who insists, “There must be a pony in here somewhere”—but I think it is quite apparent that within this problem, this wrenching, “What are we going to do?” it isn't rushing back to the old days because I don't think they are to be had, not in this present economic reality. But we do have to be innovative and creative and find a way to support families, to have their children in places that are good. There are shared jobs, and there is the thing of having children at the workplace, centers in the workplace. I think that is forward-thinking, and companies are doing it—not enough are. And on maternity leave, you cannot see maternity as an illness; that is ridiculous.

So I think there is a greater opportunity than we know or think of in this problem, and I think the passage of the family leave legislation would be number one.

Senator DODD. It is a good point you raise, and again, as the author of it, I am obviously committed to it. It is an irony in a way. There are people who objected to child care because it was going to institutionalize the rearing of children, which I don't think was a legitimate criticism at all, although I understand their worry and their point. The irony is that many of them would be opposed to family and medical leave legislation, which is designed to achieve exactly the alternative they are talking about: The opportunity for families to be together at least during a crisis—and when I say “crisis”, the joyful crisis of a birth or an adoption, or the tragic one of a serious illness—so that you are not having to make those dreadful choices between economic survival and the necessity to be with your family.

I could not resist asking former Surgeon General Koop testifying before this committee on other matters, because his background was in pediatrics, and I think he had in fact run one of the hospitals in Philadelphia a number of years ago, about family and medical leave. He didn't get into endorsing a particular bill, but he said I'll just tell you as a medical conclusion that infants in a hospital who are with parents or with family members, have a recovery rate in excess of 50 percent that of a child who is on its own or with strangers. In fact he said what I adopted as a part of the practice in the hospital for children who didn't have family there, who had come from great distances so their families could not be with them, was to have other families sort of “adopt” them while they were in the hospital. This was so that they would see people other than people dressed in white coming in to see them, so there was a familiar face and someone who cared about them as an individual and was not sitting there asking a lot of medical questions or health questions to them.

So there is no question in my mind about the importance of that, and I just hope that some of the people who were most critical about child care legislation will now become my strongest advocates on family and medical leave—if in fact they believe their arguments against child care, then they should be.

Ms. HARPER. Yes—let's call them on that.

Senator DODD. Let's try and do that.

Last, we've got a tremendous amount of energy that has built up around the country. You have mentioned a number of people in the entertainment field who have stepped forward; I mentioned Paul Simon the recording artist, who has sponsored these vans in New York that provide health services to children or homeless; I know Henry Winkler has been deeply involved in the substance abuse areas—

Ms. HARPER. Yes, and the McClaron Hall abused children; he and his wife Stacy have been with that for maybe 10-15 years.

Senator DODD. Yes, and I wonder—you may not have it today—but how we might channel a lot of these resources and this growing concern. We find people like Paul Taylor, a political reporter here in this town with the Washington Post, who walked in to his editor and said, “Forget it—I'm not going to cover politics any

longer; I want to cover children and families. To me that is what most people care about in this country, and I'd rather be involved in something that people seem to be more relating to than the issue of who is a Presidential candidate."

So there is a lot of interest out there, and it seems to me if we can bring it together to do the right things, it would be vitally important.

Ms. HARPER. It is. That is exactly what is beginning to happen. Sam Harris, who is sitting behind me——

Senator DODD. Yes. I should have recognized Sam, by the way. We are delighted to have you here.

Ms. HARPER. Sam Harris is the executive director of RESULTS. Sam was speaking with me last evening about the very fact that suddenly the media is starting to take it on themselves—as you said, the Paul Taylor situation—because they are human being, and they are Americans. I think people don't work on something they don't think they can affect. If I told people in this room to go to the Potomac and work on it flowing the other way, they'd say, "Valerie, I think I'll just climb Everest instead." You want to do the doable.

And this saving of children, people are beginning to perceive that it is absolutely achievable, you see; that is the message that is getting out. And to get people moving and generated and understanding how quickly we have to move to stop the death rate, to stop the suffering, to stop the impairment—it is going to take the media.

Carole Kane, a good friend of mine and a major supporter, on the Arsenio Hall Show, she got out and talked about the candlelight vigils, and they had—how many calls, Sam—8,000 calls came in from one evening's show, asking, "What can I do? I want to support the Summit," etc. And that was only one appearance. Carole works with a wonderful woman named—I think it is Buckholtzer—who does AIDS babies and crack baby work in New York. I have so many actor friends who really realize deeply—you don't do it for publicity. You use a tool you have, which is fame and microphone—I used to say megaphone, but that dated me tremendously. We are a public address system, literally. The media will come to see us—they came to see you today, Senator——

Senator DODD. No; they came to see you. [Laughter.]

Ms. HARPER. But what I am saying is that we can use our notoriety, fame, visibility, trustability, especially television stars—Jimmy Smits, you love him as Sifuentes on "L.A. Law"—when he came to the candlelight vigil, it was so wonderful that he was taking a stand not just for Hispanic children or American kids, but kids all over the world. Those kinds of things mean something to people.

But the real thing is that each person has such a contribution to make. I don't exactly know how we do it, but we need to use the media to get people communicating with the Senate and the House, supporting you guys who are doing great work, and indoctrinating or exciting or educating those who don't know the issues, who don't know the statistics about children. And the achievability of it—we have got to keep saying that it can be done, and it can be done quickly; in America, it can be done so fast. It is a bigger problem in other parts of the world, but even there by the turn of the century, we could do it. If we make the Nineties the "decade of the child",

and if we work our tails off to get these child deaths down, get hunger really abolished, forever, what a gift to the 21st century.

I mean, this countdown that the media has made in the Gulf—it was almost like New Year's Eve with the ball coming down on Times Square, or the Super Bowl or something—and we are poised still, and it is quite a dire situation—I'd love people to take that on for the end of this decade for children, that we are going to walk into the next century with this stuff handled for these little ones, who deserve to be put first, and really for the most part have been put last.

So I think the media is very key. I have many colleagues in my work and others who want to contribute what they can. The thing that famous folks have is just this ability to speak out and be heard and get the message disseminated. We are kind of the messenger. And what you do is align yourself with excellent organizations, like I have with RESULTS. RESULTS and Sam Harris are committed to create a movement for children as was the movement for the environment; that's what his commitment is, and they have been doing it for 10 years through lobbying and editorials and fabulous work.

So I would say to people work with RESULTS, work with child groups that you know—people have to look and find where. But it is time to roll up our sleeves.

Senator DODD. And get it done.

I would last point out the crisis at home. We have from the Children's Defense Fund some data on an annual basis, and Senator Kennedy very poignantly took it down to a day. We pointed out with family and medical leave that it is two cents a day for the employer to support a family and medical leave policy for their employees. Out of a package of some \$8,000 in benefits, two cents a day is hardly what you would call a staggering cost.

But if you look down at the other numbers, on a daily basis what is happening—2,500 children are born to single parents, and 135,000 kids bring a gun to school every day. Those statistics give you an indication of just what happens every 24-hour period in this country, and that ought to become a challenge for anyone regardless of how you feel about other issues.

I apologize, by the way, that we don't have more members here today, but you pointed it out—the reason is, of course, the Persian Gulf crisis which is preoccupying the attention of members.

Ms. HARPER. Of course.

Senator DODD. You are wonderful to have come a long way, to travel across the country to be with us.

Ms. HARPER. It is my privilege; really, it is my privilege.

Senator DODD. And we are going to be in continuing touch with you.

Ms. HARPER. Thank you, and thank you for your leadership, Senator Dodd.

Senator DODD. We'll work with you, and hopefully we'll get some additional ideas and thoughts on how we can best move forward and see if we can't achieve those goals for this decade that you have accurately pointed out.

Ms. HARPER. I promise to be a partner all the way through, until we finish it.

Senator DODD. Thank you very much.

Ms. HARPER. Thank you.

Senator DODD. I would ask my Connecticut family, because our Baltimore family has yet to arrive, if you could hold on for a moment. We'll jump to our third panel and then come back to you if that is all right.

So I'll ask the third panel to join us here at the table: Paul Harrington, who is associate director of the Center for Labor Market Studies at Northeastern University; Sarah McLanahan, who is a professor of sociology and public affairs at Princeton; Nicholas Zill, who is executive director of Child Trends; Sherry Deane, who is deputy executive director of the National Black Child Development Institute, and Judith Wallerstein, who is executive director of the Center for the Family in Transition, in Corte Madera, CA.

We thank all of you for being here, and I hope I haven't thrown you off balance by asking you to come up ahead of our two families who are here.

Let me briefly introduce you. Paul Harrington, as I mentioned, is the associate director for the Center for Labor Market Studies. He will describe the economic situation of families with children during the 1980's. I briefly addressed that in my conversation with Ms. Harper.

Sara McLanahan, professor of sociology, as I mentioned, and is co-author of "Single Mothers and their Children". She will focus on the changing conditions of single-parent families and recommendations in the area of child support.

Nicholas Zill is the director of Child Trends, a research organization I would point out that has consistently produced excellent reports on the status of American children. Today he will focus on the health and education of children, including his recent work on the impact of family disruption on children.

Sherry Deane is the deputy director for the National Black Child Development Institute, and she will describe a report by her organization comparing conditions for African American families 20 years ago and what exists today.

Judith Wallerstein is executive director of the Center for the Family in Transition and is a widely-recognized author and expert on the impact of divorce on children and their families. Her recent bestseller, "Second Chances: Men, Women and Children a Decade after Divorce", focuses on her comprehensive study of children and divorced families. She will discuss the devastating psychological and economic factors of divorce on both parent and child and the need for coordinated services that address the family as a unit.

I hope I have adequately described what you are going to get into in far greater specificity, but that will give our audience and others an opportunity to prepare themselves for your testimony and your remarks.

I'll ask you to begin your testimony in the order I have introduced you, so Paul, we'll begin with you. I promise you that every single word, utterance, comma, punctuation mark will be included in their entirety in the record—but for the sake of brevity, if you might boil your remarks down to some 8 or 9 minutes, we can get through the panel and get to the questions, so we can develop a dialogue with you—thank you.

STATEMENTS OF PAUL E. HARRINGTON, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR, CENTER FOR LABOR MARKET STUDIES, NORTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY, BOSTON, MA; SARA S. MCLANAHAN, PROFESSOR OF SOCIOLOGY AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS, PRINCETON UNIVERSITY, PRINCETON, NJ; NICHOLAS ZILL, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, CHILD TRENDS, WASHINGTON, DC; SHERRY C. DEANE, DEPUTY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,, NATIONAL BLACK CHILD DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE, WASHINGTON, DC, AND JUDITH WALLERSTEIN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, CENTER FOR THE FAMILY IN TRANSITION, CORTE MADERA, CA

Mr. HARRINGTON. Thank you, Senator Dodd.

My task today is to present a summary of a report that my colleagues Andrew Sum and Neeta Fogg at the Center for Labor Market Studies along with myself prepared, entitled somewhat ominously: "The Big Chill: Economic Stagnation among Families with Children in the 1980's"—and you have a copy of that.

Where I'd like to begin, if you take a look at the report, is with the findings on median family incomes and the kinds of developments we have had in family income trends in the US. Like your Family Report Card, although we use slightly different monetary values, the story that we found is that despite tremendous turbulence and dynamism in the US economy during the decade of the 1980's despite the fact that we created 19 million new jobs in the Nation between 1979 and 1989, despite the fact that unemployment rates dropped between 1982 and 1989 from 9.5 percent down to about 5.5 percent, that we had really fundamentally failed to generate family income gains in the Nation.

Between 1979 and 1989, family incomes rose by about four-tenths of one percent, so that despite all this tremendous dynamism in the economy, that growth in jobs and reduction in unemployment did not translate into family income gains.

That development, Senator, is very consistent with what we have observed in the 1970's, when we had very, very modest growth in overall levels of family income, somewhere over the decade between 2 to 3 percent, which is essentially no growth. But that stands in very sharp contrast to the growth in family incomes that we had during the decade of the 1950's and 1960's where over that postwar period through 1970 family incomes, purchasing power, and living standards basically doubled over that period of time.

Senator DODD. They doubled from 1950 to 1970, or each decade?

Mr. HARRINGTON. Doubled from 1950 through 1970.

When you take a look at the findings of our report, what you can see is that trends in family income varied sharply according to the family tie. Married couple families actually had some modest income gains between 1979 and 1989; their average family income rose by about 4.5 percent. But female-headed families—those family groups that your Family Report Card shows growing most rapidly—experienced an 11 percent income loss.

Second, what we found in our studies is that minorities, particularly Hispanics, experienced substantial median family income declines over the decade. Hispanic family income fell by 13 percent.

But in my mind the most startling development that has occurred with respect to median family income trends has got to do

with years of schooling. People with higher levels of educational attainment, particularly college graduates, were able to generate net income gains for their families of about 8 percent; at the same time, individuals with fewer than 12 years of schooling experienced a one-quarter drop in their family incomes in 10 years.

Turning to the second table, Senator—

Senator DODD. By the way, are these gross incomes or net incomes, and are the cost of living, the cost of food, the cost of housing and so forth, factored in?

Mr. HARRINGTON. Senator, these are estimates derived from the current population survey of total family income, pre-taxed total family income, for 1989 and for 1979. What we did was simply take the 1979 income figure and adjust it to 1989 prices. As a result, we kind of factor out inflation in doing that, and the net result is family incomes on average did not grow much, but that for different groups we have very sharply different sets of stories.

When we ask ourselves why did family incomes fail to grow, one of the alternative explanations is well, maybe families didn't try as hard; maybe they are not working as much as they did in the past. And the answer is actually quite the contrary. Families now, as you suggested in your opening remarks, supply many more hours of labor over the course of the year than they have in the past. Married couple families supply about 5 percent more hours of work. Female-headed families, despite the income loss, are now supply about 8 percent more hours over the course of the year. Basically, most demographic groups are supplying more labor now than they had in the past.

The reason why family incomes have not grown, sir, is not because families are working less—in fact they are working somewhat more. The problem is that mean hourly earnings, the productivity of American workers are reflected in mean hours, is simply not growing.

What that boils down to is that we have generated growth in lower productivity job growth and lower productivity lower-paying, nonmanufacturing sectors, and this has resulted in a reduced wage scale for family heads and spouses.

An interesting point in going through some of the family data, particularly in your own State of Connecticut where I have been able to do a lot of work, a major part of the reason why families have been able to even maintain their income standards is the contribution of wives' earnings to married couple family incomes has really grown considerably over the last 10 years; it is increased hours of work that have really allowed families to just simply maintain the status quo over the last decade.

The second problem, though, that we confront is not simply poor performance in earnings gains. The second problem that I think has influenced a lot of the data that you have in the Family Report Card has got to do with the way that the distribution of income has changed in the US—it is not simply a lack of wage growth that caused some of these problems; it is also a problem of a worsening income distribution within the US.

Between 1979 and 1989, individuals who were in the top 20 percent of the income distribution who had children increased their share of family income from about 39 percent up to about 42 per-

cent on Table 3. People in the bottom 20 percent of the income distribution—actually in the bottom 3 quintiles in the income distribution—all experienced net losses in their share of family incomes.

So we've really got two factors at work, Senator. One is slow growth or no growth in wages and in some cases real wage declines, combined with a worsening income gap.

Senator, if you will turn to Table 4, I think that is where we get maybe the most profound story, and that is developments with respect to family poverty rates.

Between 1979 and 1989, as I mentioned, we created 19 million new jobs and had reductions in unemployment rates, and our economy by 1988, anyway, many economists felt was in full employment. As we moved toward full employment, family poverty rates rose. And one of the lessons that is very simply clear here is that problems of unemployment and problems of poverty are not closely connected, and strategies that are designed to overcome basic problems of unemployment are going to work definitely to impact different groups in our society relative to strategies designed to solve problems of particularly family poverty.

When we take a look at the individual subgroups, I think the finding that stands out in this table is that poverty rates vary enormously by the type of family that we have. Married couple family poverty rates are 7 percent in 1989; female heads that have a child at home have poverty rates of about 44 percent. More than 4 in 10 single mothers are poor, Senator.

The second key finding in this table is the race/ethnic composition of a family has tremendous impact on whether that family will be poor or not. White nonHispanic families have poverty rates below 10 percent; Hispanic poverty rates are 30 percent. Black non-Hispanic poverty rates are closer to 35 percent.

Last, what this table also I think very clearly reveals is that educational attainment heavily influences the probability of a family being poor. Dropout-headed families with children have poverty rates of 40 percent; families who are headed by a college graduate have poverty rates less than 3 percent.

The sad thing with this, Senator, is that there is a high degree of interrelationship among these groups. I don't want to mislead you and suggest that female heads are different than white and Hispanic and are different than high school dropouts. These groups are all quite interrelated, and the problems of poverty are closely concentrated among female-headed, minority, poorly-educated family heads. And a growing body of evidence—and I suspect some of the witnesses coming on later on will talk about this—really suggest the development of a somewhat permanent underclass within the US, particularly among children, that the rate of transition for children out of poverty is substantially below the rate of transition out of poverty for other types of individuals.

So that what is happening is we have this dramatic increase in the number of families headed by single moms, when single moms have very high probabilities of being poor. Then, as you turn to Table 5, you get these almost I would say quite ominous estimates of problems of family poverty.

As you mentioned, one in five children in the US were poor in 1989; but when we look at the details of that it becomes somewhat

more pessimistic, particularly when tied in with your Family Report Card.

Children of married couple families, only one in 10 of those children were poor. Among female-headed families, a child who lived in a female-headed household, one in two of those children were poor, and their chances of staying poor over an extended period of time are really very, very high.

What we are finding as we review these results—and I'll just end my comments now—is that the stagnant decline in real wages and growing income inequality that we have just discussed in my view have combined to keep family poverty rates high.

Second, trends in the way families are formed and dissolved, as you mentioned, have led to very high and growing proportions of single-parent families, and this suggests in my own mind that family poverty problems are going to worsen in the coming decade.

Third, fundamental changes in job content of the American economy have resulted in our failure to improve the real earnings of American workers, and we expect these developments to continue in the future. The latest set of Bureau of Labor Statistics projections on job growth really suggest continued job loss in the high-wage sector and that the job growth we are going to get down the road is going to come more likely in some of the low-wage sectors, part-time and part-year job sectors, of the economy.

In the short term, the onset of the current national recession, particularly in your own State and my own State of Massachusetts, the short-term prospects for reducing family poverty rates are very, very weak. We fully expect that poverty rates of families will rise in the near future.

Over time as the economy recovers, we believe family poverty rates can fall, but fundamental action needs to be taken. First, a set of strategies designed to increase the labor force attachment of families at the bottom of the economic ladder have got to be put in place. We've got to be able to get the lowest-income, the people who we believe are now beginning to form the permanent underclass, to become more active participants within the job market.

Second, and of certainly equal importance, we have got to equip family members with the education and skills that are necessary to boost worker productivity in this country that can bolster family incomes down the road and provide these families with decent and human living conditions.

Thank you very much, Senator.

Senator DODD. Thank you. That was very comprehensive testimony and very, very helpful and very, very disturbing. I'd like to come back to you in a few minutes with some questions about strategies, as you have talked about.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Harrington follows:]

The Big Chill: Economic Stagnation Among Families With Children in the 1980's

Testimony before the U.S. Senate Subcommittee on Children,
Families, Drugs and Alcoholism

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Introduction

During the past decade, a growing and diverse set of concerns were raised about the economic and social well-being of the nation's families and their children. Among these concerns were those related to the supposed lack of sustained progress in boosting real family incomes, growing income inequality, an increase in the incidence of poverty, rising housing burdens accompanied by declines in home ownership and increasing public awareness of homelessness, and an absence of medical insurance coverage for many of the nation's most vulnerable citizens.

The 1980's were a decade of substantial economic turbulence, marked by fundamental shifts in the structure of jobs by industry and occupation, by stagnation in average real wages, by growing regional inequality in per capita and family incomes, and by increasing earnings inequality between the nation's best educated and least well educated workers. The onset of the decade witnessed two back-to-back economic recessions, with the 1982 downturn driving the aggregate unemployment rate during that year to 9.7%, the highest it had been in the post-World War II era. Over the next seven years, however, the national economy experienced continuous growth in the real output of goods and services, the Great American Job Machine produced 19 million net new wage and salary jobs in its nonagricultural industries, the number of employed civilians (16+) increased by 17.8 million, labor productivity in manufacturing performed admirably, and the aggregate unemployment rate fell continuously, dropping to 5.3% in 1989.

Taking into consideration the good times with the bad, it only seems appropriate to assess the consequences of this decade of economic change and turmoil for the economic and social well-being of the nation's families with children. This research report is designed to summarize and assess key findings of our analysis of the changing economic fortunes of the nation's families with children present in the home. The assessment will cover progress over the 1979-89 decade and will emphasize changes in the real incomes of these families, the degree of income inequality, the incidence of poverty, and the ability of families to own their homes, avoid excessive housing burdens, and gain access to health insurance coverage. For most of these key indicators, the findings will be presented for all families with children and for major demographic and socioeconomic subgroups.

The Nation's Families with Children

Our brief report on the economic and social conditions of American families during the decade of the 1980's is focused on those family households containing one or more children under 18 years of age who were the own children (son, daughter, step-son, step-daughter) of the family householder.¹ During March 1990, there were approximately 32.3 million such family households in the United States of whom 76% were married couple families and the remaining 24% were single parent families, a substantial majority of whom (85%) were headed by a woman.

The bulk (95%) of the nation's children reside in families of the above type; however, some children live in families that do not contain either of their natural or adopted parents, some live in subfamilies in households with others to whom they are not related, and others (approximately 280,000) are placed in foster homes on a temporary basis.² While our analysis of the economic conditions of family households will focus on that subset of families with one or more own children, we will also highlight key indicators for all of the nation's children under 18 living in families regardless of whether they are the own children or other relatives of the family head.

There is a particular subset of family units classified as "subfamilies" by the Census Bureau who will not be covered in this report due to space and time limitations, but who deserve the close attention of this committee. These subfamilies are families that share either the living quarters of another household to whom they are related ("related subfamilies") or the living quarters of friends/partners ("unrelated subfamilies").³ During March 1990, we estimate that there were 2.38 million such subfamilies containing one or more children under 18 years of age. These subfamilies have characteristics that sharply distinguish them from all primary families with children. These subfamilies are primarily single parent families (84%), nearly half of them are nonwhite or Hispanic, 61% of the heads are under the age of 30, and 81% of them have not completed any schooling beyond high school. Given their young ages, their limited schooling, and the frequent absence of a spouse, the incomes of these subfamilies are quite low. If they had to depend solely on their own income to provide for their economic support, 57% of these subfamilies would have been classified as poor in 1989.⁴

Trends in Median Real Incomes of Families With Children

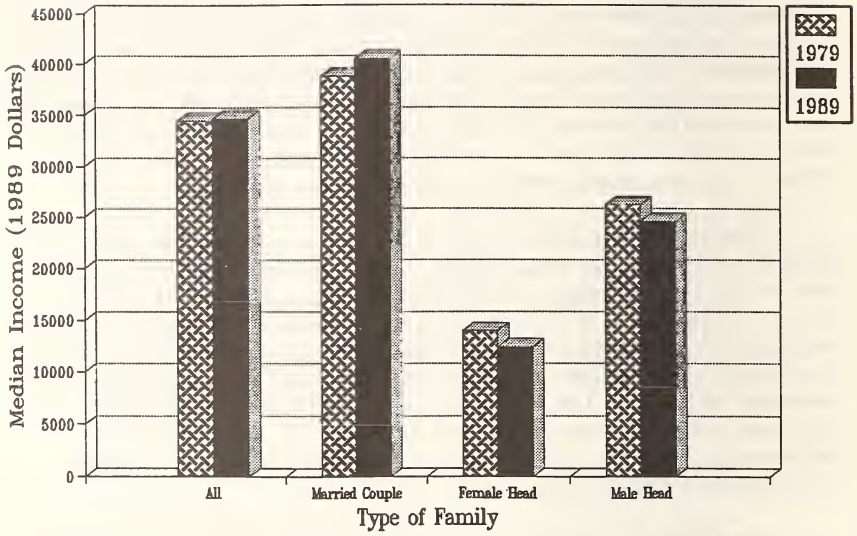
One of the most-frequently cited indicators of the economic well-being of American families is that of their median real income. The median income of families is that income which divides the distribution into two equal parts. Half of the nation's families with children will have a money income less than the median, and the other half of the families will have an income above this level. To provide appropriate comparisons of trends in the median incomes of families over time, we have converted the estimated 1979 median incomes into their equivalent 1989 dollars via use of the Bureau of Labor Statistics' Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers, generally referred to by its acronym the CPI-U.

Between 1979 and 1989, the median real income of all families with children was basically unchanged (Table 1). The 1989 median income of such families was \$34,586, a figure only \$142, or .4%, higher than that prevailing among such families in 1979. Use of a slightly modified CPI-U index for 1979 would raise the estimated growth rate in median real family income to approximately 3% over the past decade, but leave the basic story of relative stagnation unchanged.⁵ The .4% growth rate for the 1980's is only several percentage points below that for the 1969-79 period, but represents a radical departure from the 1960's and 1950's when real family incomes grew rapidly, nearly doubling over a 20 year period.⁶

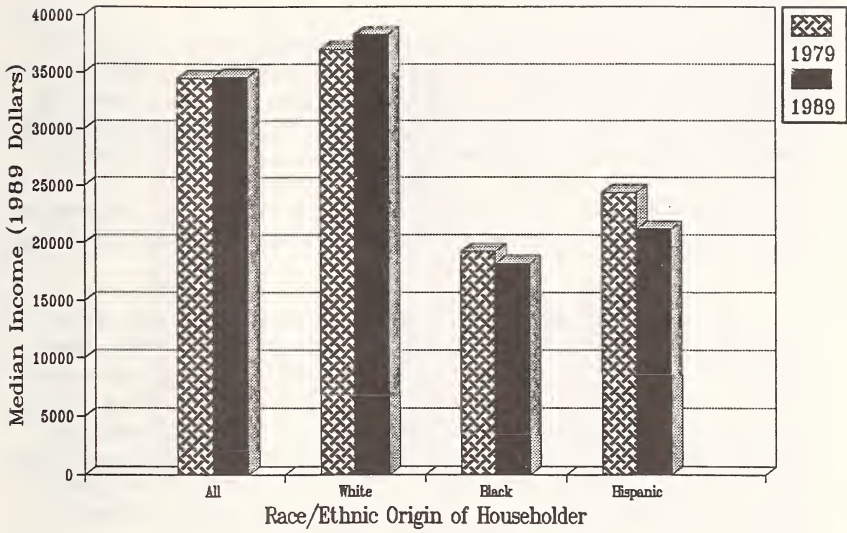
Growth rates of median real incomes over the 1980's varied among key family subgroups, with more substantive gains occurring for a few subgroups and declines taking place for many others (Table 1). For example, married couple families with children increased their real median income by 4.4% over the decade while single parent families lost ground, especially female-headed families (-11%). White, non-Hispanic families were able to improve their real income position by 3.5% over the decade while both Black (-5%) and Hispanic families (-13%) experienced an erosion in their real incomes.⁷

Finally, families headed by an individual completing four or more years of college boosted their real median income by 8% over the past decade while every other subgroup of families faced deteriorating real incomes, with families headed by high school dropouts faring the worst. The strong growth in college labor market jobs during the 1980's was clearly a major factor influencing the rising real incomes of families headed by college graduates. Of the net gain of 16.5 million employed persons (16+) between 1983 and 1989, slightly over 54% of the change

Median Real Income of Families With
Children, by Family Type, 1979-1989



Median Real Income of Families With
Children, by Race/Ethnic Group, 1979-1989



occurred in professional, managerial, technical, and high-level sales occupations, which are dominated by two and four-year college graduates.⁸

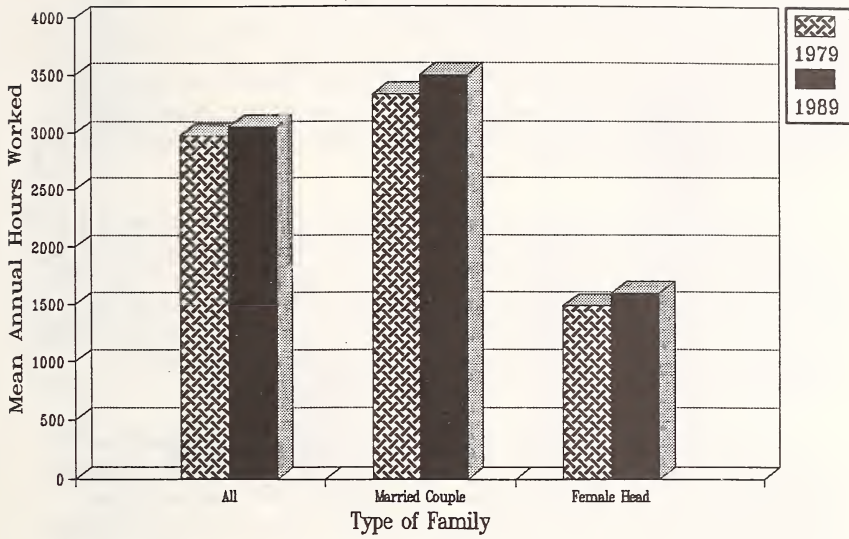
Trends in Annual Hours of Employment Among Families with Children

The lack of progress in improving the real income position of most American families with children may have been influenced by a number of different labor market problems, including limited labor force attachment by the householder, the spouse, and other family members, high rates of unemployment among active labor force participants, or the absence of growth in real hourly earnings. To identify trends in the combined work effort of families with children, we estimated the annual hours worked by each family member (15+) and summed these hours across all family members with some employment experience during 1979 and 1989 (Table 2).⁹

Our estimates of combined family work effort indicate that work effort among families with children actually increased between 1979 and 1989. Mean hours of work for all families with children during 1989, including those with no earners, were 3,050, a mean that was 70 hours or nearly 2.5% above that of 1979. The continued shift in the composition of families with children toward single parent families held down the increase in family work effort.¹⁰ Within each of the three family type categories, combined work effort increased to an even greater degree, ranging from an additional 112 hours (or 8%) among female-headed families to 171 more hours (or 5%) among married couple families.

The trends in family work effort were quite varied across educational attainment subgroups. Mean annual hours of work among families headed by an individual lacking a high school diploma fell by 200 hours while families headed by college graduates increased mean work effort by 131 hours, or 4%, between 1979 and 1989. The general failure of families with children to boost their real incomes over the past decade was, thus, not attributable to reduced work effort, but rather to reductions in the real hourly wages of many employed family members. The increased work effort of these families also imposed additional costs on them, including child care costs, work-related expenses, and reduced leisure time/home output. A 1986 Census Bureau survey of the child care arrangements of working mothers with children under 15 revealed that one-third of such employed mothers incurred financial costs in arranging for such care, with the mean weekly payment being equal to \$45, or 6% of the family's gross income.¹¹

Mean Annual Hours Worked by Families
With Children, by Family Type, 1979-1989



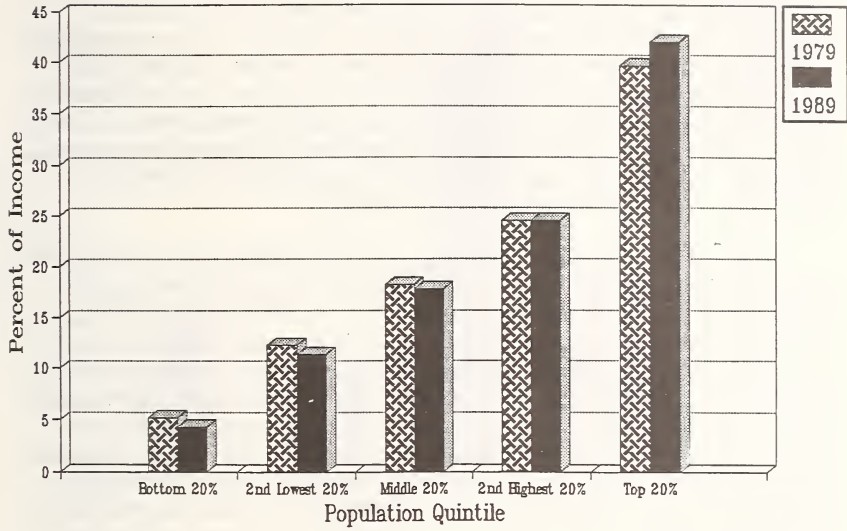
Trends in Family Income Inequality

During the 1980's decade, the distribution of income among all family households (including those without children under 18) became more unequal. Families in the top fifth of the distribution increased their share of total family income from 41.7% in 1979 to 44.0% by 1988, with all of the increase in their share coming at the expense of families in the bottom three quintiles.¹² Those families in the bottom fifth of the income distribution experienced a decline in their share from 5.2% to 4.6% over the above time period. In its release of the 1989 findings, the Census Bureau emphasized a further widening in the degree of income inequality among families.

To identify the extent to which similar patterns of inequality prevailed among families with children, we have estimated the shares of total money income received by families with children in each quintile of the distribution during 1979 and 1989 (Table 3). Due to Census Bureau restrictions in the reporting of the size of earnings and incomes of the highest income families, our estimates of the share of income received by families in the top quintile are conservative, likely understating their true share by more than one full percentage point.

Between 1979 and 1989, the share of total money income of families with children received by those in the top quintile of the income distribution increased from 39.7% to 42.0%. The share of income obtained by those families in the second highest quintile remained unchanged at 24.5% while the shares of income received by each of the remaining three quintiles declined. This heightened degree of family income inequality is clearly seen by comparisons of the shares of income received by families in the top and bottom quintiles. By 1989, the mean income of families in the top quintile was nearly 10 times greater than that of families in the bottom fifth of the distribution. More detailed analyses of the family income distribution data by the Center for Labor Market Studies have revealed that this increasing inequality occurred in all major family subgroups, including married couple families and single parent families, among Blacks and Hispanics as well as Whites, and among families headed by high school dropouts, high school graduates, and college graduates.¹³

Distribution of Income Among Families
With Children, 1979-1989



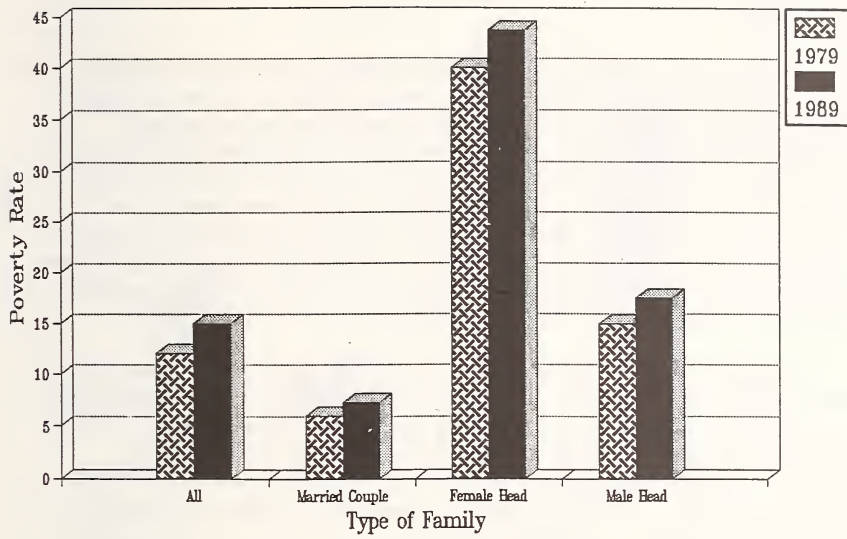
Poverty Rates Among Families With Children

The poverty rate is a frequently cited indicator of the economic situation of families with children. Unfortunately, the family poverty rate was higher at the end of the decade of the 1980's than it was in 1979 despite sustained economic growth over the past seven years. The 1989 poverty rate among families with children stood at 15% versus only 12% in 1979.¹⁴ (Table 4). A closer examination of the poverty situation among different subgroups of families indicates a high degree of variation in poverty rates. Single parent families have typically been the hardest hit although poverty also increased among married couple families. During 1989, the poverty rate among female-headed families with no spouse present was a staggering 44%. Families headed by race/ethnic minorities and less educated householders also experienced very high poverty rates.

The absence of progress in reducing family poverty problems over the past decade is hardly surprising given the lack of substantive growth in real median incomes and increased inequality in the family income distribution. Increasing numbers of families have not only slipped down the economic ladder but continue to stay at the bottom. For many families with children under 18 poverty is not a highly transitory phenomenon. The composition of families at the very bottom of the income distribution has been consistently moving in the direction of what is referred to as the underclass of families.¹⁵ Increasing proportions of these families are female-headed families and families headed by poorly educated householders who are in a less favorable position to take advantage of increased numbers of job opportunities, particularly in the higher level, white collar occupations that grew rapidly in the 1980's.

Married couple families have managed to partially offset the effects of stagnant real wages by increasing family work effort particularly through increasing the wife's intensity of participation in the labor force. Double earner families have been more successful in avoiding poverty albeit at a cost. Increased participation in the labor force is not costless, especially for families with children. Daycare, transportation, and other work related costs combined with the ever increasing scarcity of 'quality time' with the family and children result in a tighter squeeze on these families in terms of economic and non-economic costs. Thus, although the poverty rate among married couple families with children only rose from 6% to 7% between 1979 and 1989, the personal cost at which they managed to keep the poverty rates from rising much further should not be ignored. Single parent households typically do not have the option of mitigating the effects of real wage stagnation through additional earners and are thus, the hardest hit. Given the

Poverty Rates of Families With
Children, by Family Type, 1979-1989



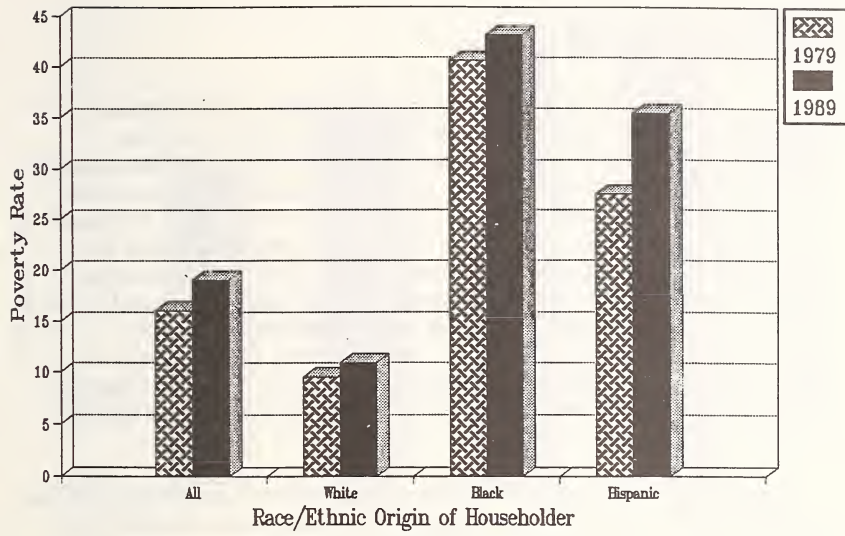
changing industrial and occupational structure of jobs in the economy, families with less educated heads have been severely affected, often experiencing declining real wages on jobs that they secure. In 1989, 40% of all families with children with a householder who had less than 12 years of schooling were poor. The poverty rate among such families during 1979 was thirteen percentage points lower or only 27%.

Poverty rates among the nation's children follow the same pattern as the families in which they reside. Poverty rates among children, however, are higher than the poverty rates among families with children due to the fact that poor families contain more children than non-poor families. Moreover, the exit rate from poverty for the nation's children was quite low compared to exit rates from poverty for all persons. Eighty percent of all children who were poor in 1984 continued to remain poor in 1985. This results in a poverty exit rate of only 20% among all children between 1984 and 1985. In contrast, the poverty exit rate for all persons during the same time period was 25%, i.e., one fourth of all persons who were poor in 1984 were no longer poor in 1985.¹⁶

Almost a fifth of the nation's children under 18 lived in poor families during 1989. In 1979, the poverty rate among such children was only 16%. Poverty rates among Hispanic children have risen sharply from 27% in 1979 to 35% in 1989. A high and rising proportion of black, non-Hispanic children also live in poor families. Poverty rates among children also vary systematically with their family living arrangements. Whereas, one out of every ten children in married couple families live in poverty, an astounding 50% (one out of every two) of the children who reside in female-headed families live in families with an income below the official poverty line.

An increasingly unequal distribution of family income combined with frequently stagnant or declining wages/incomes for key subgroups of family heads have kept the poverty rates among families at relatively high levels. Given the fundamental changes that continue to occur in the way in which families are formed and dissolved and the recent poor performance of the economy in raising real weekly earnings of many family heads, we do not expect any of the above patterns to change in the near future. Changing demographics and wage structures make it increasingly difficult to alter the trend unless we increase the labor force attachment of the families at the bottom of the economic ladder and equip them with the education and skills necessary to boost productivity in the work place.

Poverty Rates Among Children Under 18,
by Race/Ethnic Group, 1979-1989



With the onset of the current national recession, the short term prospects of reducing the poverty rate among families are quite weak. Experience from past recessions leads us to believe that the poverty rate among families with children will rise in the near future.

Trends in Home Ownership
Rates Among Families With Children

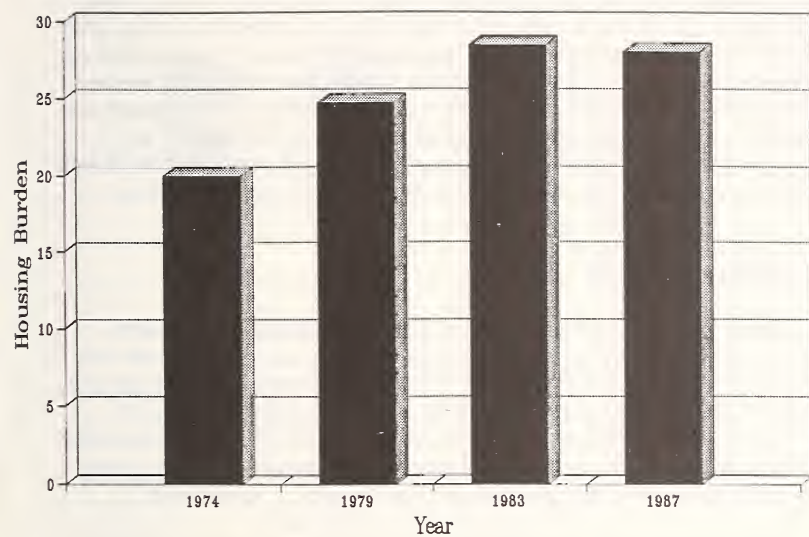
The ownership of one's own home has been a fundamental component of the American dream in the post-World War II era. The Congress also has repeatedly committed itself to home ownership goals and in the 1949 Housing Act declared that the nation should guarantee access to decent housing in a suitable living environment "for every American family."¹⁷ A combination of low growth in real family incomes and rising relative costs of home ownership during the 1980's reduced home ownership opportunities among American families with children. As noted earlier, median real incomes of such families increased by less than 1% over the decade while the costs of home ownership were rapidly outstripping increases in the overall consumer price index. Between December 1982 and calendar year 1989, the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers is estimated to have increased by 27.0% while housing ownership costs rose by 37.3% over the same time period.¹⁸

As a consequence of the above trends, the proportion of the nation's families with children that owned their housing unit declined over the decade from 71.4% in 1979 to 64.7% in 1987 (Table 6). This decline in home ownership stands in sharp contrast to the experiences of families without children, among whom home ownership rates increased over the 1979-87 period.¹⁹

The declines in the home ownership rates of families with children occurred among married couple families as well as single parent families, including both male and female householders. The likelihood of home ownership among families with children, however, continues to vary widely by type of family. During 1987, nearly 3 of every 4 married couple families with children owned their home while less than one-third of single parent, female-headed families did so. The continued rise in the share of the nation's families headed by a single parent, especially never married women, has had an independent, adverse effect on home ownership rates.

The rise in the cost of housing, both rental and owner-occupied, also has increased the share of family income that was devoted to housing expenditures in

Trends in the Housing Burden of
Families With Children, 1974-1987



the 1980's. Between 1979 and 1987, the average share of a family's gross money income (before taxes and excluding in-kind transfers such as food stamps and Medicaid) devoted to housing expenditures rose from 24.7% to 28.0% (Table 7).²⁰ An increase in this expenditure ratio occurred among nearly all family subgroups, with the exception of White, non-Hispanics; however, the relative size of these housing burdens continues to vary widely by family type, race/ethnic group, and family income. Families headed by Blacks and Hispanics devoted about 36% of their money incomes to housing expenditures, single parent families on average allocated 46% of their incomes to housing, and poor families with children spent nearly 64% of their gross money incomes on housing in 1987. Clearly, the nation's lowest income families were increasingly left with smaller shares of their income to devote to non-housing expenditures, including food and clothing.

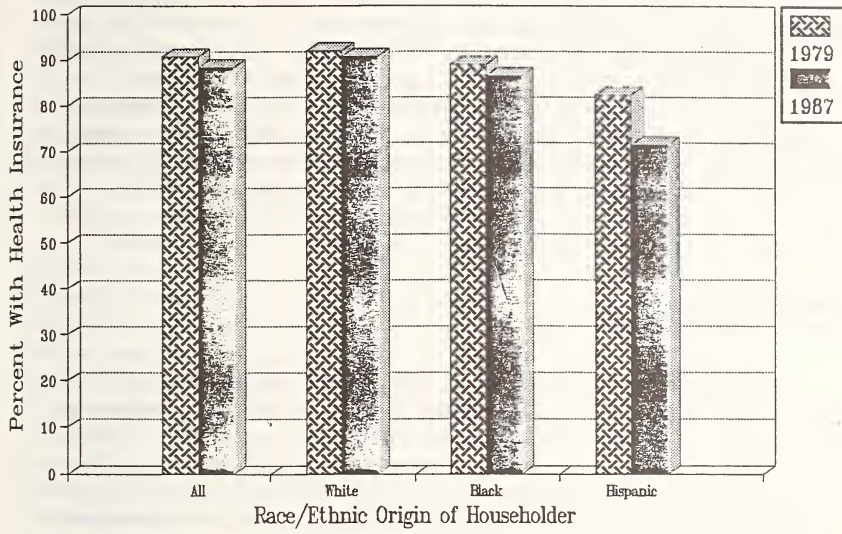
Health Insurance Coverage of Family Heads and Children

During the 1980's, increased attention was paid by health researchers, corporate leaders, and union officials to inadequacies in the nation's health care delivery and financing system, including rapidly rising costs of medical care and the absence of health insurance coverage for somewhere between 35 and 37 million Americans.²¹ The lack of health insurance coverage among the American population has been far from uniform. Coverage rates are lowest among young adults, particularly those with limited education, the poor, and Hispanics.

The fraction of family householders (with one or more children under 18 present in the home) covered by some type of health insurance plan, including Medicaid and Medicare, in 1987 was several percentage points below that of 1979 (Table 8).²² The declines in health insurance coverage occurred among family householders in each of our three major race/ethnic groups; however, the estimated size of these declines was greatest for Hispanic family householders, the fastest growing group of families in the nation.²³ During 1987, only 71% of Hispanic family heads with children in the home were covered by any type of health insurance plan versus nearly 87% of Blacks and 91% of White, non-Hispanic householders.

Health insurance coverage rates of family householders continue to vary systematically by age group, with those under 30 years of age being least likely to be covered.²⁴ The absence of health insurance coverage by growing numbers of the young and Hispanics is clearly linked to the inability of low wage workers to gain access to health insurance coverage on their jobs.

Percent of Families With a Householder
Covered by Health Insurance, 1979-1987



Given the reduction in health insurance coverage among family householders, it should come as no surprise to discover that a rising fraction of the nation's children are not covered by the health insurance plan (including Medicaid) of any family member (Table 9). During 1987, approximately one of every eight children under 18 years of age lacked any type of health insurance coverage. This represented an increase of 2.5 percentage points over the 1979 ratio of 9.5%. Health insurance coverage rates among the nation's children vary sharply by their race/ethnic origin, with 9% of White, non-Hispanic children, 13% of Black children, and 29% of Hispanic children left uncovered during 1987. Children in poor/near poor families that were not receiving public assistance income, such as AFDC benefits, were at particularly great risk of being left uncovered by any form of health insurance. Absence of such coverage can be expected to adversely influence future access of such children to the health care delivery system and their health conditions as they enter their young adult years.

Time Pressures on Families With Children

In addition to the squeeze on family incomes generated by rising costs of housing, medical care, and the care and education of their children, families have also devoted an increasing amount of time to labor market activities in the 1980's. Annual work hours have increased most among married couple families, and the wives in such families have been responsible for the overwhelming share of the net increase in hours worked. Increased hours of employment tend to be accompanied by additional hours of time devoted to work preparation and commuting. Families are, thus, left with less time available to devote to home output and leisure activities, including time with other family members.

A fairly high fraction of American families, particularly those in which both husband and wife work, perceive pressures on the time that they can devote to their family. Findings of a 1985 national telephone survey of approximately 2,000 families sponsored by the Ethan Allen Foundation revealed that 44% of all surveyed families wished that they could spend more time with their families (Table 10).²⁵ Among dual career families with children, 63% of the respondents wished that they could spend more time with their families while only 36% felt that they were allocating an appropriate amount of time with their families. Clearly, families' labor supply responses to maintain, if not improve, real family income in the 1980's has placed growing pressures on the time that is left available for family activities.

Summary and Conclusions

During the 1980's, despite seven years of continuous economic growth, families with children in the United States have achieved no substantive degree of progress in improving their living standards as measured by increases in their real median incomes. Real income growth following the recession of 1982 was only sufficiently high to offset the declines that took place between 1979 and 1982. At the same time, family income inequality worsened, poverty rates increased, and several other key indicators of family well-being, including home ownership rates and health insurance coverage, deteriorated. Although families have worked more, their money incomes have failed to rise relative to the cost of living, and herein lies the basic economic problem confronted by families with children.

Only through ever increasing weeks and hours of work were American families able to maintain or slightly improve their real living standards. Outside of the nation's manufacturing sector, worker productivity gains failed to materialize during the 1980's. In the absence of substantial productivity gains, real hourly wages of workers will fail to grow more rapidly in the 1990's. Without such productivity improvements, the only recourse for families that wish to boost their living standards is to work even more hours during the course of the year. While families with children may not have reached a maximum limit to annual work hours, these families do incur real monetary and time costs in pursuing such income growth strategies. Policies to support the work efforts of families can ease the burdens that they face; however, they should be complemented by a concerted set of labor market policies to improve the future productivity of American workers.

Endnotes

1. The term "family householder" was developed by the Census Bureau as a replacement for the previous "family head" designation used prior to 1980 to define family relationships. In a married couple family, the householder can be either the husband or the wife although the husband is identified as the householder in more than 90% of family households in the late 1980's.
2. This estimate of the number of foster children in the U.S. is based on testimony by Joe Kroll, Executive Director of the North American Council on Adoptable Children before the U.S. Senate Subcommittee on Children, Families, Drugs, and Alcoholism, Hearings on the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1989, February 2, 1989.
3. All of the persons that comprise related subfamilies are included as members of the primary family in whose household they reside. If this primary family has one or more own children under 18, then these related subfamilies will be picked up in our count of families with own children. The unrelated subfamilies, however, are not included in the count of families with children. Beginning in 1980, the Census Bureau revised its procedure for classifying such subfamilies, and they are no longer counted as a separate family. The numbers, demographic characteristics, and economic status of such subfamilies can, however, be estimated with the March CPS data. For an overview of the numbers and characteristics of young related and unrelated subfamilies,

See: Clifford Johnson, Andrew M. Sum, and James Weill, Vanishing Dreams: The Growing Economic Plight of America's Young Families, Children's Defense Fund, Washington, D.C., 1988.

4. After taking into account the money income of all related family members, the poverty rate for subfamilies is 30%. This poverty rate was double the rate for primary families with one or more own children under 18 years of age in 1989.
5. Beginning in 1983, the Bureau of Labor Statistics revised its procedures for calculating changes in home ownership costs to a system based on rental equivalence rather than purchase price and mortgage interest rate changes. The previous procedures were believe to provide an upward biased estimate of the true costs of home ownership for families and, thus, overstated the

true rate of inflation. The values of the CPI-U index based on these new procedures are also available for years prior to 1982. If we use the values of this new price index for the years 1979-82, then the 1989 real median income of families would be 3% higher than the 1979 income (in 1989 dollars) rather than the .4% change based on the published CPI-U index of the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Use of either of these two price indices yields a similar conclusion about the growth in the median real incomes of families with children, i.e., very little progress in improving family purchasing power over the decade. For a review of the potential uses of the CPI-U and CPI-X price indices,

See: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, Consumer Income, Series P-60, No. 166, "Money Income and Poverty Status in the United States: 1988," U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., 1989.

6. Between 1969 and 1979, the median real income of U.S. families with one or more own children under 18 increased by 3.5%. In contrast, the median real incomes of all families in the U.S., with and without children, rose by nearly 32% between 1959 and 1969.

See: Center for Labor Market Studies, Northeastern University, Social and Economic Indicators for Families with Children, Volume 1, Prepared for Russell Sage Foundation, New York, 1990.

7. Our race/ethnic categories are mutually exclusive. Householders of Hispanic origin can be of any race; thus, to avoid overlap, Hispanics were removed from the count of White, Black, and other nonwhite families.
8. High level sales occupations include proprietors, sales supervisors, and sales representatives in finance, wholesale trade, and services.

See: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Employment and Earnings, January 1984 and January 1990.

9. The work experience supplements to the March Current Population Survey provide information on both the weeks of employment (including paid vacations) during the preceding calendar year and average hours of work per week. By multiplying weeks times hours of work per week, we obtained estimates of annual hours of employment for each family member.

10. During March 1980, slightly more than 80% of the nation's families with one or more own children under 18 were married couple families; however, as indicated earlier, this ratio had fallen to 76% by March 1990.
11. Poor women who made cash payments for child care spent only \$32 per week; however, their payments represented 22% of their gross monthly income versus 6% for all employed mothers.

See: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, Household Economic Studies, Series P-70, No. 20, "Who's Minding the Kids? Child Care Arrangements: 1986-87," U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., July 1990.
12. See: i) U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, Consumer Income, Series P-60, No. 142, "Money Income of Households, Families and Persons in the United States: 1982," U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., 1984;

ii) U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, Consumer Income, Series P-60, No. 166, op.cit.
13. Center for Labor Market Studies, Northeastern University, Social and Economic Indicators for Families with Children, Volume 1, Prepared for the Russell Sage Foundation, New York, 1990.
14. In measuring the poverty status of families, we have used the official poverty income guidelines of the federal government.
15. See: Sawhill, Isabel V., "What About America's Underclass", Challenge, May/June 1988, pp. 27-36.
16. The poverty exit rates were computed by the Census Bureau by dividing the number of persons who were above the poverty level in 1985 but were poor in 1984 by the total number of persons who were poor in 1984. For additional information on poverty exit rates, .

See: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Transitions in Income and Poverty Status: 1984-85, Series P-70, No. 15-RD-1.

17. See: Michael A. Stegman (Editor), Housing and Economics: The American Dilemma, MIT Press, Cambridge, 1970, pp. 9-38.
18. See: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Monthly Labor Review, May 1990, "Table 31," p. 97.
19. Home ownership rates among families with no own children under 18 years of age increased from 75.5% in 1979 to 80.4% in 1987. These estimates are also based on the findings of the American Housing Surveys for 1979 and 1987. For further details on these measures and housing indicators for America's families,

See: Center for Labor Market Studies, Northeastern University, Social and Economic Indicators for the Nation's Family Households, Volume Two, Prepared for the Russell Sage Foundation, New York, City, 1990.
20. A housing expenditure ratio was calculated for each family. Housing expenditures include payments for utilities (water, gas) and property taxes but do not take into consideration home furnishings or their maintenance. The mean of the housing expenditure ratios is used as our measure of average housing burdens. For further details on these definitions,

See: Center for Labor Market Studies and Center for Applied Social Research, Northeastern University, A Data Dictionary for the Family Indicators Volumes and Accompanying Technical Appendices on Key Concepts and Measures Underlying the Construction of Specific Indicators, Report Prepared for the Russell Sage Foundation, New York City, 1990.
21. For a review of gaps in the nation's health care delivery and financing systems,

See:
 - i) Blendon, Robert J., "What Should Be Done About the Uninsured Poor?," in the Journal of American Medical Association, Volume 260, December 1988, pp. 3276-77.
 - ii) Louise B. Russell, "Proposed: A Comprehensive Health Care System for the Poor," The Brookings Review, Summer 1989, pp. 13-20;

- iii) Navarro, Vicente, "A National Health Program Is Necessary," Challenge, May/June 1989, pp. 36-40.
- 22. Estimates of health insurance coverage rates for 1988 were not strictly comparable to those for 1979 since the CPS questionnaire for March 1989 did not include a question on self-purchased health insurance plans. As a consequence, we restricted our comparisons to the 1979-87 period.
- 23. Between March 1980 and March 1989, the number of U.S. families with a householder of Hispanic origin increased by nearly 1.8 million or 59% versus a growth rate of only 10.6% for all families throughout the nation. Given the young ages of many of these Hispanic family householders, higher fractions of them contain children under the age of 18.

See: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Reports, Consumer Income, Series P-60, No. 166, "Money Incomes and Poverty Status in the United States: 1988," U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., 1989.
- 24. Among all young adults under 30, males and those lacking any post-secondary schooling are least likely to be covered by any form of health insurance. Hispanic and Black males with no post-secondary education are particularly vulnerable.

See: Andrew Sum and Neal Fogg, "The Changing Economic Fortunes of Young Black Men in America," The Black Scholar, January-February 1990, pp. 47-55.
- 25. See: Research and Forecasts, Inc., The Ethan Allen Report: The Status and Future of the American Family, Ethan Allen, Inc., Danbury, 1986.

Appendix:

Statistical Tables on Family Social and
Economic IndicatorsTable 1:

Trends in the Median Real Incomes of Families With One or
More Own Children Under 18, by Family Type and
by Race/Ethnic Origin and Educational Attainment
of Householder, 1979 to 1989
(in 1989 Dollars)

	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)
<u>Family Group</u>	<u>1979</u>	<u>1989</u>	<u>Absolute Change</u>	<u>Percent Change</u>
All	34,444	34,586	+142	+0.4%
<u>Family Type</u>				
o Married Couple	38,821	40,534	+1,713	+4.4%
o Male Head, no spouse present	26,143	24,600	-1,543	-5.9%
o Female Head, no spouse present	13,975	12,420	-1,555	-11.1%
<u>Race/Ethnic Origin</u>				
o Black, not Hispanic	19,232	18,200	-1,032	-5.4%
o Hispanic	24,370	21,200	-3,170	-13.0%
o White, not Hispanic	37,004	38,290	+1,286	+3.5%
<u>Years of Schooling</u>				
o Less than 12	22,703	17,000	-5,703	-25.1%
o 12	33,313	29,850	-3,463	-10.4%
o 13-15	37,575	36,700	-875	-2.3%
o 16 or More	50,732	54,800	+4,068	+8.0%

Source: March 1980 and March 1990 Current Population Surveys.

Note: The 1979 median money incomes of families were converted into their 1989 dollar equivalents with the use of the CPI-U index, for All Urban Consumers in the U.S.

Table 2:

Trends in the Mean Annual Hours of Work of
All Family Members (15+) in Families with One or
More Own Children Under 18, by Family Type and
Educational Attainment of Householder, 1979 to 1989

Family Group	(A) 1979	(B) 1989	(C) Absolute Change
All	2,980	3,050	+70
Family Type			
o Married Couple	3,332	3,503	+171
o Male Head, No Spouse Present	2,204	2,354	+150
o Female Head, No Spouse Present	1,483	1,595	+112
Educational Attainment			
o Less than 12.	2,626	2,424	-202
o 12	2,996	3,052	+56
o 13-15	3,076	3,173	+97
o 16 or More	3,313	3,444	+131

Source: March 1980 and March 1990 Current Population Surveys.

Table 3:

Trends in the Distribution of Money Income
Among Families With One or More Own Children
Under 18, 1979 to 1989
(Numbers in Percent)

Family Income Group	(A) 1979	(B) 1989	(C) Change
Bottom 20%	5.2	4.3	-0.9
Second Lowest 20%	12.3	11.4	-0.9
Middle 20%	18.2	17.7	-0.5
Second Highest 20%	24.5	24.5	0.0
Top 20%	39.7	42.0	+2.3

Source: March 1980 and March 1990 Current Population Surveys.

Table 4.

Poverty Rates Among Families With One or More Own Children Under 18, by Family Type and Race/Ethnic Origin and Educational Attainment of Family Householder, 1979 to 1989

(Numbers in Percent)

Family Group	1979	1989	(C) Change
All	12.1	15.0	2.9
Family Type			
o Married Couple	6.0	7.2	1.2
o Male Head, No Spouse Present	14.9	17.5	2.6
o Female Head, No Spouse Present	40.0	43.7	3.7
Race/Ethnic Origin			
o Black, not Hispanic	32.9	34.8	1.9
o Hispanic	24.1	30.1	6.0
o White, not Hispanic	7.8	9.4	1.6
Educational Attainment (in Years)			
o Less than 12	26.5	39.0	12.5
o 12	10.3	15.3	5.0
o 13-15	6.7	9.0	2.3
o 16+	2.5	2.7	0.2

Source: March 1980 and March 1990 Current Population Survey.

Table 5.

Percent of Children Under 18 in Families With An Income Below the Poverty Line, by Family Type and Race/Ethnic Origin, 1979-1989

Group of Children	(A) 1979	(B) 1984	(C) 1989
All	16.0	21.0	19.0
Family Type			
o Married Couple	8.3	12.1	9.8
o Male Head, No Spouse Present	15.5	23.3	20.9
o Female Head, No Spouse Present	48.6	54.0	49.4
Race/Ethnic Origin			
o Black, not Hispanic	40.6	46.1	43.2
o Hispanic	27.4	38.7	35.4
o White, not Hispanic	9.6	13.1	10.9

Source: March 1980, March 1985, and March 1990 Current Population Surveys.

Table 6:

Percent of Families With One or More Children
Under 18 Years of Age that Own Their Own Home,
by Type of Family, 1979-1987

Group of Families	(A) 1979	(B) 1983	(C) 1987
All	71.4	67.7	64.7
Family Type			
o Married Couple	79.2	75.4	74.0
o Male Head, No Spouse Present	64.7	60.1	55.5
o Female Head, No Spouse Present	37.3	33.3	31.7

Source: American Housing Surveys, 1979, 1983, 1987.

Table 7:

Housing Expenditures as a Percent of the
Gross Money Income of Families With Children
Under 18, by Family Type and Race/Ethnic
Origin of Householder, 1979-1987

Group of Families	(A) 1979	(B) 1983	(C) 1987	(D) Change 1979-87
All	24.7	28.4	28.0	+3.3
Family Type				
o Married Couple	20.9	24.1	22.8	+1.9
o Male Head, No Spouse Present	24.0	31.1	28.3	+4.3
o Female Head, No Spouse Present	40.1	46.3	45.9	+5.8
Race/Ethnic Origin				
o Black, not Hispanic	30.9	36.1	36.4	+5.5
o Hispanic	29.2	33.8	35.7	+6.5
o White, not Hispanic	25.9	26.3	25.2	-0.7
Poor Families	53.9	60.0	63.6	+9.7

Source: American Housing Surveys, 1979, 1983, and 1987.

Table 8:

Percent of Family Householders With One or More Children Under 18 Who Lack Any Type of Health Insurance Coverage, Total and by Race/Ethnic Origin and Age of Family Householder, March 1980 and March 1988

Family Group	(A) March 1980	(B) March 1988	(C) Change
All	90.8	88.3	-2.5
Race/Ethnic Origin			
o Black, not Hispanic	89.0	86.6	-2.4
o Hispanic	82.4	71.4	-9.0
o White, not Hispanic	91.9	90.8	-1.1
Age of Family Head			
o Under 25	87.0	81.5	-5.5
o 25-29	89.9	84.9	-5.0
o 30-34	92.0	88.1	-3.9
o 35-44	91.2	90.1	-1.1
o 45-54	91.4	89.8	-1.6
o 55-64	87.2	86.7	-0.5

Source: March 1980 and March 1988 Current Population Surveys.
Health insurance coverage pertains to status during previous calendar year.

Table 9:

Percent of Children* Under 18 in Families that Are Not Covered by Any Type of Health Insurance Plan Including Medicaid, Total and by Race/Ethnic Origin, March 1980 and March 1988

Group of Children	(A) 1980	(B) 1988	(C) Change
All	9.5	12.0	2.5
Race/Ethnic Origin			
o Black, not Hispanic	10.8	13.3	2.5
o Hispanic	18.0	29.2	11.2
o White, not Hispanic	8.3	9.2	0.9

Source: March 1980 and March 1988 Current Population Surveys.

Note: Findings pertain to all children under 18 that were related to the head of the primary family in which they resided. Health insurance coverage is for prior calendar year.

Table 10:

All Families and Dual Career Families' Views
on Appropriateness of Amount of Time Spent
With Family
 (Numbers in Percent)

<u>Family Group</u>	(A) Spend Just Right Amount of Time	(B) Wish They Could Spend More Time	(C) Wish They Could Spend Less Time
All Families	54	44	2
Dual Career Families With Children	36	63	1

Source: The Ethan Allen Report: The Status and Future of the American Family.

Senator DODD. Our next witness is Sara McLanahan.

Sara, thank you for being with us.

Ms. McLANAHAN. Thank you, Senator Dodd.

I appreciate the opportunity to speak before you today.

For the past 10 years, I have been doing research on single-parent families. This morning I'd like to tell you about my findings in three different areas—both the prevalence and trends of single-parent families, the consequences of families, and something of what we have learned about how policies might affect these families.

With respect to trends, as your chart shows up here, the incidence of single-parent families has increased dramatically since 1960. One in 10 children were living in such a family in 1960; one in 4 are today. Even more striking is the fact that 50 percent of all environment born in the 1980's are expected to spend some time in a single-parent family. The percentage for Afro Americans is even higher—it is 80 percent. So this is a situation that affects all Americans, and a large proportion of children.

Another thing that has changed about single-parent families is their composition. Whereas in the past a large proportion of single-parent families were living with widowed mothers, today the mothers are much more likely to be divorced and never married.

This change has important policy implications insofar as single-parenthood is much more likely to be a voluntary event, and it is also much more likely that the nonresident parent is alive.

A final change that has occurred in the character of single-parent families is that environment now spend a longer period of time once they enter a single-parent family. This is partly because the divorce or the nonmarriage occurs at a younger age and because remarriage is less common.

The most important consequence, as you have noted, of single-parenthood is the poverty and the economic insecurity of the mothers and the children. Nearly 50 percent are living below the poverty line, and this percent is also depending on AFDC.

Single mothers have much higher poverty rates than all other family groups, and their poverty rates have not changed very much since the late Sixties, early Seventies. So for example, whereas poverty for the elderly went from 30 percent in 1967 to 13 percent today, the poverty rate for single mothers and their children has stayed at 50 percent.

So it is pretty clear we can do things about the poverty when we really put our minds to it.

In addition to the poverty, the single mothers who are poor have generally experienced a substantial drop in income, somewhere between 30 and 50 percent.

So what does all this imply for children's well-being? Again, for the past 10 years I have been doing a lot of research on the long-term consequences for children are, and I will just highlight some of the major findings.

First of all, single parenthood is associated with a wide range of negative outcomes in children, including dropping out of high school, unstable employment patterns, giving birth out-of-wedlock and giving birth as a teenager. These results are consistent across a large number of racial and ethnic groups, including white, black,

Mexican American, Puerto Rican, Native American and Asian American. They are larger for whites than for other groups—that is, the effect of single parenthood seems to be more dramatic for white children—and they are similar for boys and girls.

Some of these negative outcomes result from preexisting conditions in the families that break up or never form. The children in such families would have been worse off regardless of whether or not their parents stayed together. A substantial part of the negative outcome, however, is due to single parenthood itself.

The case of single parenthood does not seem to have much effect on children's behavior. In other words, children who live with a divorced and never-married or separated mother tend to pretty much resemble one another. Children living with widowed mothers do a little bit better than the others.

The sex of the single parent does not matter. Children who grow up with a single father do just as poorly as those who grow up with a single mother. There is some evidence that having a grandmother in the household reduces the negative impact of single parenthood.

Remarriage does not help—and this is perhaps one of the most surprising findings. Children who live with a mother and a stepfather do about as poorly as children who live with a single parent.

Finally, differences in family income account for some, but not all, of the negative consequences associated with single parenthood.

Given the importance of family income in accounting for some of the lower attainment of children, the question arises as to how to increase income. For the past 8 years I have been working with a group of researchers at the University of Wisconsin to help design and evaluate a child support assurance system.

The new plan has three components—a component for standardizing the amount of awards, a component for increasing collections, and a component called a “guaranteed minimum benefit”, that I’ll say something about in a minute.

The recent Family Support Act has adopted the first two of these components. According to our estimates, withholding the child support award from the father's pay check has increased payments in Wisconsin by between 10 to 30 percent and reduced welfare costs by 5 to 20 percent. So this is clear evidence that fathers can afford to pay more and that child support reform can help reduce economic insecurity. More is needed, however.

First, we've got to do something to ensure that all children have a child support award. At the current time only 60 percent of children even have an award. And the area where we can make the greatest improvement is in the establishment of paternity for children who are born out-of-wedlock.

Senator DODD. How do 40 percent of children not get an award? Where does that come from?

Ms. McLANAHAN. That partially represents the fact of children born to never-married mothers; about 16 percent of those children have an award. So maybe 80 percent of children of divorced mothers have an award. Very often the judge will say if the father doesn't have a job, well, what's the use, we don't need to worry about him—when in 2 years, he may have a job, and could share in supporting his child.

So we have got to do more in that area of getting the awards.

Second, I think we need to establish a guaranteed minimum benefit for all children with child support awards. This benefit would be equal to the difference between what the father owes and what the State deems to be a minimal level of support. New York State is currently piloting such a program with a \$3,000 floor, and this program would be different than a welfare benefit because it would not be taxed like welfare, a dollar for each dollar that the mother earns.

Finally, even under an ideal child support system, a substantial number of single-parent families would still be poor. Therefore we need to make additional changes in our income transfer system beyond child support reform. This is because a lot of the fathers just don't earn that much, and a lot of the mothers don't earn enough to lift themselves out of poverty.

At the top of my list would be subsidies for medical care and child care. Many single mothers are afraid to leave welfare because of the loss of medical benefits. Similarly, many mothers with low earning capacity cannot afford to work because of high child care costs.

The Family Support Act covers medical benefits and child care costs for up to 1 year after leaving welfare, but many single mothers need more than 1 year of support.

Finally, I would recommend changing the child exemption in our current tax system into either a refundable credit or a child allowance paid to all families.

Together with child support reform, these proposals would go a long way toward eliminating the poverty of most single mothers. In addition, health insurance, child care and child allowance should be made available to all poor families with children, which would reduce the incentives for the formation of single-parent families.

Thank you.

Senator DODD. Thank you very much, Sara.

[The prepared statement of Ms. McLanahan follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SARA S. MCLANAHAN

Senator Dodd, committee members, I appreciate the opportunity to speak before you today. For the past 10 years I have been doing research on single parent families. This morning I would like to report on some of my findings in three different areas: how has the prevalence and nature of single parenthood changed over time? What are the consequences of single parenthood for women and children? And what can be done to reduce poverty and economic insecurity in single parent families?

As most of you know, single parenthood has grown rapidly during the past 30 years. In 1960, less than one in 10 children lived in a single parent family. Today, the number is one in four. Furthermore, about 50 percent of children born in the 1980's are expected to spend some time in a single parent family before reaching age 18. For Afro-American children the estimate is even higher: about 80 percent. These numbers clearly demonstrate that single parenthood should be a topic of concern to all Americans concerned about children and about our Nation's future.

While single parent families are not new, they have changed in several important respects during the past 50 years. First, today's single parents are more likely to be divorced or never married and less likely to be widowed than those in the past. This has important policy implications insofar as single parenthood is more often a voluntary event and the non-resident parent is more likely to be alive. Second, today's children spend a longer period of time in a single parent family than in the past. This is due to the fact that the initiation of single parenthood occurs at a younger age and remarriage has become less common than in the past.

The most notable consequence of single parenthood is the poverty and economic insecurity of single mothers and their children. Nearly 50 percent of these families are living below the poverty line and depending on public assistance for their survival. Single mothers have much higher poverty rates than other family/household types and their poverty has remained fairly constant over time. Whereas poverty among the elderly fell from about 30 percent to 13 percent between 1967 and 1988, poverty among single mothers remained about the same. Furthermore, most single mothers who are not poor have experienced a major drop in their standard of living—from 30 to 50 percent.

What does all this imply for children's long term well-being? For the past 8 years I have been trying to answer this question, using several representative samples of the national population. Based on this research, I offer the following conclusions.

Single parenthood is associated with a wide range of negative outcomes in children, including dropping out of high school, unstable employment patterns, giving birth out of wedlock, and giving birth as a teenager. The results are consistent across a large number of racial and ethnic groups—including whites, Blacks, Mexican Americans, Puerto Ricans, Native Americans and Asian Americans. They are larger for whites than for other groups and they are similar for boys and for girls.

Some of these negative outcomes result from pre-existing conditions in families that break up or never form. The children in such families would have been worse off regardless of whether or not their parents stayed together. A substantial part of the negative outcomes, however, are due to single parenthood itself.

The cause of single parenthood (divorce, separation, non-marriage, death) does not seem to have much effect on children's behavior, with the exception of widowed-mother families where children do somewhat better.

The sex of the single parent doesn't matter; children who grow up with single fathers do just as poorly as those who grow up with single mothers. There is some evidence that having a grandmother living in the household reduces the negative impact of single parenthood.

The age at which the disruption occurs does not matter very much. Disruptions that occur during adolescence appear to be just as negative as those that occur in early childhood or at birth.

Remarriage does not help. Children who live with a mother and step-father do about as well as children who live with a single parent.

Finally, differences in family income account for some but not all of the negative consequences associated with single parenthood.

Given the importance of family income in accounting for some of the lower attainment of children, the question of how to increase income becomes critical. For the past 4 years I have been working with a group of researchers at the University of Wisconsin to help design and evaluate a Child Support Assurance system (CSAS). The new plan has three components: a formula for standardizing child support awards, a system for collecting awards through wage withholding, and a guaranteed minimum benefit provided by the State to cover all children with awards. The recent Family Support Act has adopted the first two of these components.

According to our estimates, routine withholding of child support has increased payments in Wisconsin by between 10 percent and 30 percent and reduced welfare costs by 5 percent to 20 percent. This is clear evidence that fathers can afford to pay more and that child support reform can help reduce the economic insecurity of single mothers. More is needed, however, if we are to eliminate poverty in these families.

First, we must do more to insure that all children have a child support award. Establishing paternity and obtaining child support awards for children of non-married parents will be a key issue in the 1990's. Second, we need to establish a guaranteed minimum benefit for all children with child support awards. This benefit would be equal to the difference between what the father owes and what the State deems to be a minimum level of support. New York State is currently piloting such a program with a \$3,000 floor.

Finally, even under an ideal child support system, a substantial number of single parent families would still be poor. Therefore we need to make additional changes in our income transfer system beyond child support reform. At the top of my list would be subsidies for medical care and child care. Many single mothers are afraid to leave welfare because of the loss of medical benefits. Similarly, many mothers with low earnings capacity cannot afford to work because of high child-care costs. The Family Support Act covers medical benefits and child-care costs for up to one year after leaving welfare, but many single mothers need more than a year of support. Finally, I would recommend changing the child exemption in our current tax system into either a refundable credit or a child allowance paid to all families. To-

gether with child support reform, these proposals would go a long way toward eliminating the poverty of most single mothers. In addition, health insurance, child care and child allowance should be made available to all poor families with children which would reduce incentives for the formation of single parent families.

Thank you again for inviting me to speak.

Senator DODD. Nicholas Zill.

Mr. ZILL. Good morning. My name is Nicholas Zill. I am a psychologist and the executive director of child trends.

I was asked by your staff, Senator, to provide an overview of the current physical and emotional health of American children—

Senator DODD. I should point out for those of you who have been gracious enough to note the Family Report Card that a good part of that data comes from Nicholas Zill, and we appreciate your help in compiling that information.

Mr. ZILL. I am glad to do it, Senator.

I have also been asked to describe some survey results about children's developmental problems that have raised concerns among health experts and members of the general public.

I'd like to begin by stating that the child health picture in the United States is not a monochromatic one. There are bright areas of genuine and significant progress and darker areas where conditions have remained bad or gotten worse.

There is so much negative news about AIDS and child abuse and the crack epidemic and other public health problems that it tends to obscure the genuine progress that has been made in combatting childhood disease and death.

Thanks to improved nutrition and sanitation, immunization programs, more stringent safety regulations, advances in biomedical technology, increased public awareness of the dangers of drugs and alcohol, and Medicaid and other programs that make medical care available to low-income families, many indicators of child health have shown substantial improvement.

In the interest of time, I am not going to enumerate some of the positive developments that have occurred, but they are in my written testimony. There have been some very dramatic declines in childhood death rates. I think the important message here is that public and private efforts to improve the condition of children can make a difference. We must not despair, as I think Ms. Harper was saying.

Unfortunately along with the good news has come a troubling lack of progress in several areas. For example, there has been no progress in the last decade in increasing the proportion of pregnant women who receive appropriate prenatal care or in decreasing the proportion of low birth-weight babies. In fact, among black children, there has actually been an increase recently in low birth-weight babies.

In 1988, one birth in 17 was to a mother who received late prenatal care or no care at all, and among black babies the ratio was one in 9, among Hispanics one in 8. The proportion of births that resulted from unwanted pregnancies has actually increased during the 1980's.

Progress in reducing infant mortality has slowed, and in addition the number of pediatric AIDS cases increased dramatically. In 1988-89, the number of AIDS cases reported was five times the

number reported between 1981-84. There have also been continued disparities along racial and income-related lines in indicators like low birth weight, infant mortality, homicide, and overall health status. Again, these are detailed in my written testimony, which also discusses the nutritional status of young children and medical care and medical insurance.

So this lack of progress in many aspects of children's physical health is troubling. Even more so are recent data indicating that the mental health of our young people is getting worse. In 1988 the National Center for Health Statistics surveyed the parents of more than 17,000 children around the US. The survey produced the following disquieting results.

One in five children aged 3 to 17 was reported to have had a serious emotional or behavioral problem, a learning disability, or a delay in growth or development. That projects to more than 10 million children nationwide.

By the time youngsters enter their teen years, one in four has had one or more of these problems, and for male teenagers it is nearly one in three.

In addition, one in five teens has had to repeat a grade in school, and one in eight has been suspended or expelled from school. Grade repetition and suspension are often precursors of school dropout, delinquency, premature parenthood and welfare dependency.

The survey found that developmental difficulties were far more prevalent among children from disrupted and disadvantaged families than among those from stable middle class families. For example, children living with their mother and a stepfather were three times as likely to have had a serious emotional or behavioral problem and twice as likely to have had a learning disability as those living with both biological parents. Children living with their mother only were twice as likely to have had a persistent emotional problem, and about 50 percent more likely to have a learning disability. Teenagers from low-income families were twice as likely to have repeated a grade or to have been suspended from school as teens from nonpoor families. The higher prevalence of achievement and conduct problems was found both among those from welfare poor and those from working poor families.

In the 1988 survey, black and Hispanic parents reported more grade repetition and suspension than nonminority parents did. For example, one-third of black teens had repeated a grade; one out of four had been suspended from school. But they did not report more learning disabilities or emotional disorders.

Teacher reports and school records suggest that psychological problems are more common among minority children. The disparity between parent and school-based data may be due to cultural divergences in the awareness and acceptance of childhood psychological problems or to differences in survey recall and reporting.

The alarmingly high prevalence of emotional and behavioral problems among today's children and the observed relationship between family conflict and disruption and youthful problem behavior reinforced public concerns about the increasing number of children who are being raised in something other than harmonious two-parent families. I'd like to point out that the number that you

presented there is completely correct about the single parent, but it is an underestimate of the number of children who are living with something other than both of their birth parents. It is 60 percent of kids who are living with both birth parents; about 40 percent who are living in some other kind of family situation. As well as the 24 percent who are in single-parent families, we have 11 percent who are in step-families and 5 percent who are in foster grandparents or adoptive. So it is a very substantial segment of the child population.

Senator DODD. How did we get that number mixed up? You helped us get the data here.

Mr. ZILL. No. That number is correct. Don't forget the kids in step-families.

Senator DODD. We should have added that, then.

Mr. ZILL. Yes, yes.

Senator DODD. So it is closer to 40 percent?

Mr. ZILL. That's right.

Survey findings also underscore concerns about minority youth and the extent to which their learning and behavioral problems go unrecognized and untreated. Stable, well-functioning families are essential to the future integrity and productivity of our society. We can have all the advanced technology and weapons in the world, but it will do us little good unless we can ensure that most of our young people are being raised in nurturing families.

In terms of recommendations, let me just say briefly a couple of points I think are important. First of all, the problems of youth are not just economic. Money does make a difference, and many families with children need more money. But young people also need stable home environments that provide emotional support, intellectual stimulation, moral guidance and example. It is a lot harder to write prescriptions for bringing that about than it is for increasing the incomes of families.

Our society also needs more mental health professionals working to aid children and families. But the problems I have described are not going to be solved just by having more child psychiatrists and psychologists. The problem is too massive.

We know a good deal about the kinds of family environments that nurture positive development in young people. What we don't know is how to transmit these positive patterns to high-risk families. I believe we need to explore programs of innovation, demonstration and rigorous evaluation to see how we can help families at risk develop more positive patterns.

It is also very important that we prevent the formation of high-risk families.

I would like to conclude by saying that justly, Congress has patted itself on the back for passing many child-relevant bills last Congress, and I think it deserves a great deal of credit. But with all due respect, these measures only scratch the surface of the kinds of problems we are describing.

Thank you.

Senator DODD. I think you will find most of us up here recognize that as well. That's very, very helpful.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Zill follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF NICHOLAS ZILL

Good morning. My name is Nicholas Zill. I am a psychologist and the executive director of Child Trends, a non-profit, non-partisan research organization here in Washington that studies social changes affecting children and works to improve the information we as a nation have about our young people and their families. I have been asked to provide an Overview of the current physical and emotional health of American children and to describe some recent survey results about children's developmental problems that have raised concerns among health experts and members of the general public.

Let me begin by stating that the child health picture in the United States today is not a monochromatic one. There are bright areas of genuine and significant progress and darker areas where conditions have remained bad or gotten worse. Let us look at a few of the bright areas first.

SIGNS OF PROGRESS

In recent years, there has been so much bad news about AID5, child abuse, the "crack" epidemic, and other public health problems that it has tended to obscure the progress that has been made over the last several decades in combatting childhood death and disease. Thanks to improved nutrition and sanitation, immunization programs, more stringent safety regulations, advances in biomedical technology, and Medicaid and other programs that make medical care available to low-income families, many indicators of child health have shown substantial improvement.

One widely used indicator of health conditions for Children is the infant mortality rate—the proportion of babies who die within the first year of life. The U.S. infant mortality rate has fallen greatly. The rate in 1989—less than 10 infant deaths per 1,000 live births—was only about one-third of what it was recently as 1950 (NCHS, 1990). Death rates for Preschool and school age children have also declined Substantially. The death rate in 1989 for children between the ages of 1 and was less than half of what it was in 1960. And the death rate for children between the ages of 5 and 14 was less than 55 percent of the 1960 rate. Although mortality rates provide only a partial picture of children's health status, these dramatic declines attest to real improvements in the physical health of U.S. children.

Many communicable diseases that were once common to childhood, such as diphtheria, polio, and measles, have been eradicated or greatly reduced in frequency (NCHS, 1989b). By the time U.S. children enter school, almost 100 percent of them have been immunized against measles, mumps, rubella, diphtheria, and polio (Centers for Disease Control, 1989). Although virtually all children still have bouts of acute illness or minor injuries from time to time, most grow up Physically healthy. Eight out of 10 children are described by their parents as being in "very good" or "excellent" health, and all but about 3 percent are rated in at least "good" health (NCHS, 1989a).

That is the good news. Unfortunately, indicators of children's health and safety also showed a number of troubling trends in the 1980's.

NEGATIVE DEVELOPMENTS

To begin with, there was no progress in the last decade in increasing the proportion of pregnant women who receive appropriate Prenatal care or in decreasing the proportion of low birth-weight babies (U.S. House Select Committee, 1989). In 1988, one birth in 17 was to a mother who received late prenatal care or no care at all. Among black babies, the ratio was one in 9, and among Hispanics, one in 8 (NCHS, 1990). The proportion of births that resulted from unwanted pregnancies has actually increased during the 1980s (NCHS, 1990b).

Progress in reducing the infant mortality rate slowed in the course of the 1980's. In addition, the number of pediatric AIDS cases increased dramatically. The number of AIDS cases reported in 1988-89 was five times the number reported between 1981 and 1984. There have also been continued disparities along racial and income-related lines in child health indicators such as life expectancy, infant mortality, low birthweight, homicide, and overall health status (NBCDI, 1990; NCCP, 1990). These disparities are documented in greater detail in my written testimony. The written testimony also describes the current nutritional status of young children in the United States, and recent developments with respect to low-weight births.

EMOTIONAL AND DEVELOPMENTAL PROBLEMS AMONG U.S. YOUTH

The lack of progress in many aspects of young people's physical health and medical care is troubling. So are recent data about the emotional health and intellectual development of our youth. In 1988, the National Center for Health Statistics surveyed the parents of more than 17,000 children around the United States. The survey produced the following disquieting results:

One in 5 children aged 3-17 was reported to have had a serious emotional or behavioral problem, a learning disability, or a delay in growth or development. This projects to more than 10 million children nationwide.

By the time youngsters enter their teen years, one in four has had one or more of these problems, and for male teenagers, it is nearly one in three.

In addition, one in five teens aged 12-17 has had to repeat a grade in school, and one in eight has been suspended or expelled from school.

Grade repetition and suspension are often precursors of school dropout, delinquency, premature parenthood, and welfare dependency.

The survey found that developmental difficulties were far more prevalent among children from disrupted and disadvantaged families than among those from stable, middle-class families. For example:

Children living with their mother and a stepfather were three times as likely to have had a serious emotional or behavioral problem, and twice as likely to have had a learning disability, as those living with both biological parents.

Children living with their mother only were twice as likely to have had a persistent emotional or behavioral problem as children living with both parents, and about 50 percent more likely to have a learning disability.

Teenagers from low-income families were twice as likely to have repeated a grade or to have been suspended from school as teens from non-poor families. The higher prevalence of achievement and conduct problems was found both among those from welfare poor and those from working poor families.

Learning disabilities were nearly twice as prevalent among children whose mothers had not completed high school as among those whose mothers had more than 12 years of education. Children of dropout mothers were also more apt to have repeated a grade in school.

In the 1988 survey, black and Hispanic parents reported fewer developmental, learning, and behavioral problems in their children than did nonminority parents. However, teacher reports and school records suggest that psychological problems are more common among minority children. The disparity between parent- and school-based data may be due to cultural divergences in the awareness and acceptance of childhood psychological disorders or to differences in survey recall and reporting.

The alarmingly high prevalence of emotional and behavioral problems among today's children and the observed relationship between family conflict and disruption and youthful problem behavior reinforce public concerns about the increasing number of U.S. children who are being raised in something other than harmonious two-parent families. The survey findings also underscore concerns about minority youth and the extent to which their learning and behavioral problems go unrecognized and untreated.

IMPLICATIONS FOR INDICATORS OF CHILD AND ADOLESCENT HEALTH

Not only do we as parents and citizens need to do more to prevent and treat the mental health problems of young people, we need better and more appropriate information about their health and well-being. We must go beyond traditional indicators of death, disease, and disability, and develop measures of health-related behavior, knowledge, and attitudes that can be repeated at regular intervals to track changes in prevalence. Also needed are better measures of problems such as delays in development, learning disabilities and emotional and behavioral problems. These problems affect not only the current well-being of children but the quality of our future labor force as well.

In order to understand why changes in health and habits are occurring, factors that shape youthful behavior and well-being should be assessed periodically. These include the composition of the families in which young people are being raised, characteristics of the home environment, and patterns of parental behavior. Also relevant are conditions in the community and school, peer characteristics, media influences, shifts in the climate of opinion regarding behaviors such as drug and alcohol use, types of medical care available to the youth and family, and participation in health-promotion programs.

Children are both a national treasure and a critical resource, and we need to learn much more about the factors that enhance and undermine their development.

ADDENDUM TO TESTIMONY

DISPARITIES IN OVERALL HEALTH STATUS

The vast majority of young children appear to be in good physical health. However, parents of poor children are notably less positive when describing their children's health than are the parents of more affluent children. Moreover, the minority of children who are in poor health is twice as large among children in poverty than among other young children.

When parents are asked to rate their children's health in national health surveys, 95 percent of children under age 5 in poor families are rated as being in "good" to "excellent" health. However, less than half—41 percent—are rated in "excellent" health, whereas a majority of non-poor children—58 percent—are so described.

The proportion of poor children who are described as being in "fair" or "poor" health—5 percent—is more than twice as large as the comparable proportion of non-poor children—2 percent (NCHS, 1988).

(Although parental ratings of children's health are obviously not the same as a physician's appraisal, they have been found to be reasonably good indicators of general health status, and predictive of future use of medical care.)

In 1987, poor children under age 5 had an average of 5.7 doctor visits per person per year, whereas non-poor children had an average of 7.1 visits (NCHS, 1988). (These figures include both checkups and treatment visits, and include contacts with physicians over the telephone.)

As far as visits to a physician in the doctor's office (as opposed to a clinic or hospital setting) were concerned, poor children had an average of 2.7 per person per year in 1987, whereas non-poor children had an average of 4.2 visits (NCHS, 1988).

For children aged 5-17 the mean number of doctor visits was 2.9 for those below and 3.5 for those above the official poverty line.

DIFFERENCES IN PLACE OF CARE

There is a considerable difference between poor and non-poor children and minority and non-minority children with respect to they receive medical care. Poor children and black and Hispanic children are more likely to receive their care in hospital emergency rooms and clinics, and less likely to receive it in private physicians' offices or HMO's.

In 1988, 40 percent of children aged 1-4 in families with incomes below \$10,000 had clinics or hospital emergency rooms as their regular source of care. This was true of 11 only 7 percent of young children in families with incomes of \$40,000 and more (Bloom, 1990).

Among black children aged 1-4, 41 percent had clinics or emergency rooms as their regular place of care, as did 26 percent of Hispanic children, but only 11 percent of white children.

In 1987, nearly a fifth of the doctor visits that poor young children had were in hospital settings, and more than one-tenth were in emergency rooms. Non-poor children were only half as likely to have received medical care in these settings (NCHS, 1988).

The medical care that a child receives in a hospital emergency room may be perfectly adequate for the treatment of an acute illness or injury. But doctors working in such settings are less able to provide the continuity of care and preventive counseling that office-based pediatricians and health maintenance Organizations (HMO's) can provide. Having always to take the child down to a clinic or emergency room, as opposed to being able to talk to a doctor over the telephone about a child's condition, means more of a time burden on the parent. Paced with this burden, the parent may be hesitant about taking the child to get care in cases where she is unsure whether or not it is needed. Poor and minority mothers also frequently face language and other barriers to receiving suitable medical care for their children.

HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE

One-quarter of young children who live in lower income families are not eligible for Medicaid coverage, do not get health insurance coverage through their employers, and cannot afford to purchase it on their own. This lack of medical coverage is

actually more prevalent among poor children in two-parent families and children in single-parent families headed by divorced women than among those in single-parent families headed by never-married mothers, because the latter are more likely to be eligible for Medicaid. And the problem is just as prevalent among the near poor (children in families with incomes between the poverty level and one-and-a-half times the poverty level), as it is among children below the poverty line.

As of 1988, 26 percent of children aged 1-4 in families with incomes of less than \$10,000 were not covered by a health insurance plan or Medicaid. Almost the same figure—24 percent—applied to those in families with incomes between \$10,000 and \$24,999 (Bloom, 1990).

The comparable proportion for all children aged 1-4 was 16 percent, and for those with incomes of \$40,000 or more, only 7 percent.

The proportion with no health insurance coverage was 25 percent among Hispanic children aged 1-4, 16 percent among white children, and 20 percent among black children.

In 1986, among poor children living in two-parent families, 37 percent had no health insurance. Among those living with divorced mothers, the proportion with no health insurance was 22 percent, whereas among those living with never-married mothers, it was 15 percent (U.S. House Select Committee, 1989, pp. 212-213).

NUTRITIONAL STATUS OF YOUNG CHILDREN IN THE UNITED STATES

Adequate nutrition in early childhood is critical for normal growth and brain development. In the past, living in poverty often meant not having enough to eat. Indeed, the very definition of the official government poverty line was originally based on the amount of income needed to provide a family with a minimally adequate diet. Since the advent of the food stamps program in the mid-1960's, however, low-income families whose incomes were insufficient to purchase a subsistence diet (as well as pay for other necessities like shelter, clothing, and transportation) have been able to receive government-provided vouchers that could be used to buy food. Unlike AFDC, two-parent families are eligible for food stamps, and the benefits are indexed to increase with inflation. There are also programs aimed specifically at bolstering the nutrition of poor children: the School Lunch program and the Special Supplemental Food Program for women, Infants, and Children (WIC).

In fiscal year 1987, the food stamps program served an average of nearly 21 million people per month, about half of whom were children. Nearly 17 percent of all children under 18 received food purchased with food stamps, including 60 percent of poor children under 6, and a larger majority of those in very-low income families. In addition, the WIC program provided about 3.4 million infants, young children, and pregnant or nursing women with special dietary supplements in fiscal year 1987 (U.S. House Committee on Ways and Means, 1989, pp. 1102-1120).

Does this mean that most poor children in the United States are getting enough to eat, and enough of the right kinds of food to eat? Government survey data indicate that they are, but that conclusion is contested by food program advocates. The advocates contend that the federal surveys do not measure hunger, and that a substantial fraction of children in poor families go hungry fairly often. There are some data indicating that poor children under 6 are more likely than other children to exhibit signs of poor nutrition, such as growth retardation and anemia (Klerman & Parker, 1990). These modest but persistent differences in nutritional status between poor and non-poor children may result in part from the failure of Federal food programs to reach all eligible children. It is also generally acknowledged that there are still pockets of malnutrition in the U.S. among groups like the children of migrant farm workers.

FINDINGS OF THE NATIONWIDE FOOD CONSUMPTION SURVEY

The U.S. Department of Agriculture conducts a continuing Nationwide Food Consumption Survey that includes national samples of women aged 19 to 50 years of age and their children 1 to 5 years of age. Separate samples are taken of all women and children in these age ranges, and of low-income women and children. The latter oversamples households in high-poverty areas. In 1985 and 1986, these surveys found that the average daily food intakes of young children from poor families met or exceeded the 1980 Recommended Dietary Allowances (RDA's) for total food energy, protein, vitamins, and most minerals (USDA, 1997a and 1987b). Only iron and zinc intakes were somewhat deficient, ranging from 70 to 88 percent of the recommended levels. However, average intakes of these minerals were also below rec-

ommended levels among young children whose family incomes were above the poverty level.

Unfortunately, the published survey results do not show what proportion of low-income children fall below the Recommended Dietary Allowances. However, given that the low-income means are quite similar to the overall means, it is unlikely that the proportion with dietary deficiencies would differ greatly across the two samples.

The survey results did show some differences between the dietary patterns and nutrient intakes of poor young children and those of young children from all income groups. Among them were the following:

The diets of low-income children contained slightly more fat, cholesterol, and sodium per 1,000 kilocalories, and less dietary fiber, than those of children from all income groups.

Total meat consumption was slightly higher for low-income children, with intakes of hot dogs and luncheon meats showing the largest difference.

In 1986, low-income children ate more grain products than did children from all income groups, largely as a result of consuming more grain-mixture items such as pizza, enchiladas, and rice and pasta mixtures. On average, low-income children drank more whole milk than did children from all income groups, and whole milk (as opposed to lowfat or skim milk) was a larger proportion of their total milk intake.

Low-income children ate less fruit than did young children overall.

Low-income children consumed slightly less candy and sugar than children overall.

Low-income children drank less soda, but more "Koolaid"-type drinks and fruit-flavored drinks than children overall.

Young children from low-income families were less likely to be given vitamin and mineral supplements than were all young children.

LOW BIRTH WEIGHT

Nearly 7 percent of all babies born in the United States each year are of low birth weight; i.e., they weigh 5½ pounds or less. Slightly more than one percent are of very low birth weight, they weigh 3 1/4 pounds or less (NCHS, August 1990, Table 15). With the total number of births now at 4 million per year, there are roughly 275,000 low-birthweight infants born each year, of whom nearly 50,000 are of very low birth weight.

Low birth weight is one of the leading causes of infant mortality, with 60 percent of all deaths in the first year of life occurring among low-birthweight infants. Low-birthweight babies are nearly twice as likely as other infants to exhibit severe developmental delays or congenital anomalies, and they are at greater risk of cerebral palsy, autism, mental retardation, vision and hearing impairment, and other developmental disabilities (Public Health Service, 1990, p. 10; Shapiro et al, 1980).

Children born at very low birth weights are twice as likely to repeat a grade in school and 3 1/2 times more likely to need special education services as those born at normal birth weights (McCormick, Gortmaker, & Sobol, 1990; Newman, 1990). Children born at low, but not very low, birth weights are about 60 percent more likely to repeat a grade, but not significantly more apt to require special education. A recently released study sponsored by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation found that the developmental risks associated with very low birth weight could be reduced through comprehensive intervention programs (Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, 1990).

Low birth weight has been linked to several preventable risk factors including teen pregnancy, unintended or unwanted pregnancy, lack of prenatal care, poor nutrition during pregnancy, maternal smoking and use of alcohol and other drugs (President's Committee on Mental Retardation, 1988; Public Health Service, 1979). Low birth weight babies are more common among low-education and low-income mothers than among those with more schooling and higher incomes. Black infants are more than twice as likely as white infants to be born at low birth weights (House Select Committee on Children, 1989, pp. 166-167). Puerto Rican infants are more likely to be of low birth weight than infants from other Hispanic groups or non-Hispanic children.

There was a slight decline in the proportion of children born at low birth weights during the 1970's, but there was no further progress during the 1980's. Indeed, the most recent data indicate a slight upturn in the low birth weight proportion among black infants, coupled with a slight decline in low birth weight among white infants (NCHS, August 1990, p. 6). A major reason for the lack of improvement in the percent of low-birthweight babies during the 1980's was a rise in the proportion of pre-

term births during this period (Taffel, 1989). This proportion rose from 9.4 to 10.2 percent between 1981 and 1988, and almost 40 percent of preterm births were of low birth weight (NCHS, August 1990, p.6).

The U.S. Public Health Service has declared a national "Risk Reduction Objective" to reduce the overall incidence of low birth weight to no more than 5 percent of live births by the year 2000, and the incidence of very low birth weight to no more than 1 percent of live births (Public Health Service, 1990, p. 373). For black infants, the national goals are to reduce low birth weight incidence to 9 percent, and the very low birth weight proportion to 2 percent. It may be difficult to achieve these goals, given the lack of progress in recent years, and the negative effects of the "crack" epidemic on maternal and infant health in low-income, minority populations.

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Senator DODD. Before moving to you, Ms. Deane, I'd like to recognize the presence of our distinguished colleague Senator Pell of Rhode Island, who is the chairman of the subcommittee on education.

Senator PELL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just wanted to get the flavor of this hearing, and I wish you well, Mr. Chairman.

Senator DODD. Thank you very much for coming.

Ms. Deane?

Ms. DEANE. Good morning. My name is Sherry Deane, and I am an attorney and also the deputy director for the National Black Child Development Institute.

Before beginning, let me just say it is a personal privilege to be here. I am a former resident of Connecticut as well as the former president of the Connecticut Caucus of Black Women for Political Action.

Senator DODD. Well, come on home; all is forgiven. [Laughter.]

Ms. DEANE. So to have this opportunity in this forum to dialogue with you is indeed a privilege.

Senator DODD. Well, thank you very much, Sherry.

Ms. DEANE. The National Black Child Development Institute is a national membership organization dedicated to promoting the healthy development of black children. We have been in existence 20 years, and as part of our 20th anniversary celebration, we published a report entitled "The Status of African American Children: 20th Anniversary Report, 197-1990." For the most part, that report documented the decline that black children are facing on almost every indicator—health, child welfare. Even when we were able to document gains in education, when we reviewed those gains within the context of the gains made by their white counterparts, there were gaps to be examined within the gains.

What I would like to do today, because the report is so filled with statistics, is to extract some of those statistics and share with you what we believe will be two distinct families emerging through the decade of the Nineties and right into the year 2000.

The first family to which I would like to introduce you is middle class. Owning a home in the College Park suburb of Atlanta, GA, this family enjoys a comfortable life. The three children are preparing to go to college and have rewarding careers. Now, to fulfill these goals, the children attend highly-rated local public schools and participate in extracurricular activities. The parents are both college educated and employed in relatively well-paying positions.

Unfortunately, we project that in the year 2000, finding intact and solidly middle class African American families may become increasingly difficult—in fact, will become increasingly difficult—if current trends continue.

The status report indicates that since 1979 the real median income of black families has declined steadily and that since 1970 the number of black children growing up in single-parent families has risen steadily.

Many black families will not be faring well. These are the families earning incomes below poverty level and forced to face deplorable living conditions.

The second family to which I will introduce you is headed by a single parent, has three children, and she has never been married. The woman recently completed a job training program in order to make her family financially independent, but the skills she learned did not enable her to obtain employment with the salary and benefits that she and her children needed. Unable to find adequate and affordable child care for her youngest child, she has had to place him in a situation which indeed places him in jeopardy. Eventually, due to problems faced by this unreliable situation, she was fired, and the family once again became totally dependent on public subsidies.

The family lives in a decaying and dangerous housing project in the center of Baltimore City. The schools that the children attend are overcrowded, understaffed and poorly maintained. The oldest son is in a special education class.

Few opportunities for supervised afterschool recreation exist. The playground serves as headquarters for drug traffic.

The mother of this family tries to be a good parent, but her lack of marketable skills and the living conditions she and her children must endure have thwarted her attempts to build her family's self-sufficiency.

Let me stop at this point just to say that when we talk about children being raised in single-parent families, oftentimes it has nothing to do with the love that a single parent can provide to her children, but it has everything to do with economic reality.

The two typical families that I have just presented reflect the trends that we are seeing today. Members of the black middle class have been able to maintain an adequate standard of living, but the low-income and working class families are losing the ability to care for themselves. Large numbers of black children, a significant percentage of whom live in low-income families, face very hazardous living conditions.

Our status report indicates that through the year 2010, the majority of black children will be raised in female-headed households, will live in center cities, will dwell in neighborhoods where one-fifth or more of the residents have incomes below the poverty level,

will not have access to regular medical care, and will not graduate from college.

Additionally, disproportionately large numbers of African Americans have not been able to attain the skills necessary for self-sufficiency in America's current service economy. The resulting increases in levels of poverty have left an atmosphere of despair and depravity in many black communities that used to thrive with legitimate activity. Where familial pride, hope and aspirations of success used to dominate community values, we now find an inability to form viable family units, children without homes, some even without parents, and the rise in drug traffic and violence among black male youth.

We must enact several initiatives to solve these problems—too many, in fact, to fully discuss today. Therefore I would like to focus on three of the most pressing issues that we must address.

The first priority is to help all families become economically independent. The decade of the Eighties saw a deepening inequality both in terms of family incomes and individual incomes, so much so that the assets of white households are ten times greater than the assets of black households. Of the estimated 10 million African American children residing in the United States, almost half of them under the age of 6 are living in poverty, and 45 percent of them under the age of 18 are poor.

In a country such as ours, it is our position that we can put in place the mechanisms, such as equal employment opportunities, job creation strategies, continued increases in the earned income tax credit which will guarantee a more equitable distribution of our Nation's wealth.

My written testimony also provides some additional strategies, but in the interest of time I would like to move on to our second priority, which is to ensure that all low-income children have access to early education childhood programs.

We all know the reasons why that is important. I just want to add to that that in a 1987 publication entitled "Safeguards: Guidelines for Establishing Programs for Four Year-Olds in the Public Schools", we outline and explain the criteria needed for guaranteeing that preschool black children have positive early educational experiences.

I want to move on to really deal with the third priority which, in the decade of the Nineties, we consider to be the most challenging and frightening priority facing African American children and families who live in poverty. It really deals with developing effective strategies for handling the current drug crisis.

The large numbers of black children born exposed to drugs and HIV pose special challenges to our child welfare and medical systems. We can no longer rely upon stopgap measures. We must find adoptive homes for the thousands of boarder babies throughout the country. Continuing to allow these fragile infants and toddlers to languish in hospital care will not only burden our medical resources; it will also provide us with a population of children whose special emotional handicaps we may not be able to serve.

Thus we must ensure that our child welfare services can adequately manage these children before their problems multiply beyond control.

I commend the recent congressional legislation and initiatives toward improving the social services our children receive. Senate Bill 4, introduced earlier this week, addresses the severe impact that parental drug abuse has on children in the child welfare system and also includes viable and intensive family preservation, reunification, and follow-up services.

Additionally, the 101st Congress' passage of the Hawkins social services reauthorization and the McKinley Act reauthorization will provide funds to encourage collaboration between housing assistance and child welfare services. These actions represent the first of many badly needed improvements in the child welfare system.

However, our children will still want for adequate services until our social workers are given realistic case loads to manage and until coordination between social service agencies ensures that families get the services that they need. We must cease viewing a child as a single entity. To promote the child's best interests, we must view children as integral parts of families. Therefore the family must become the primary client within the child welfare system.

At the end of this month the institute will be issuing a report. We have looked at drug usage and its significance and impact upon placement in the foster care programs in this country. As a result of the report and its recommendations I would now like to say we will be adding an addendum to this testimony with significant implications for these programs.

Economic inequality, drug usage, increasing violence, and lack of quality child care options may be stifling the prosperity of low-income black communities today. But if we take affirmative measures now, all black children can grow up in loving, self-contained families and can enjoy a quality of life that surpasses what we presently have to offer.

Thank you.

Senator DODD. Thank you very much, Sherry.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Deane follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SHERRY C. DEANE

Good morning. I am Sherry C. Deane, Deputy Executive Director of the National Black Child Development Institute. Today I am testifying on behalf of Evelyn K. Moore and NBCDI. I would like to thank Senator Dodd for inviting me to testify before the Senate Subcommittee on Children, Family, Drugs, and Alcoholism today and I would like to thank the Subcommittee for receiving my testimony.

The National Black Child Development Institute is a national, membership organization dedicated to promoting the healthy development of Black children. In our 40 affiliates throughout the United States, volunteers engage in advocacy activities and provide services to thousands of children. Our constituency consists of parents, professionals, and laypersons of every economic and social group who want to provide a good life for Black children.

The topic I am addressing today is the African American Family and its ability to foster the growth and development of its children. Unless our legislatures implement changes in our existing domestic policies, the schism between African American families of different economic levels will continue to grow. The children of low income families will suffer needlessly and their chances of escaping the bounds of poverty will diminish.

Based on the statistics and information presented in The Status of African American Children: Twentieth Anniversary Report, 1970-1990, the National Black Child Development Institute projects that in the year 2000 two distinct types of families

will dominate African American communities throughout our nation. I would now like to introduce you to two families who typify what this not so new reality will be.

The first family to which I would like to introduce you is middle class. Owning a home in the College Park suburb of Atlanta, Georgia, this family enjoys a comfortable life. The three children are preparing to go to college and have rewarding careers. Now, to fulfill these goals, the children attend highly-rated local public schools and participate in extra-curricular activities. The parents are both college-educated and employed in relatively well-paying professions.

Unfortunately, we project that in the year 2000 finding intact and solidly middle class African American families may become increasingly difficult. The Status report indicates that since 1979 the real median income of Black families has declined steadily and that since 1970 the number of Black children growing up in single parent families has risen steadily.

Many Black families will not be faring well in the year 2000. These are the families earning incomes below poverty level and forced to face deplorable living conditions. The second family to which I will introduce you is headed by a single parent, who has 2 three children and has never been married. The woman recently completed a job-training program in order to make her family financially independent, but the skills she learned did not enable her to obtain employment with the salary and benefits that she and her children needed. Unable to find adequate and affordable child care for her youngest child, she had to place him in a precarious family day care setting. Eventually due to problems caused by this unreliable situation, she was fired and the family once again became totally dependent on public subsidies.

The family lives in a decaying and dangerous housing project in the center of Baltimore City. The schools that the children attend are overcrowded, understaffed, and poorly maintained. The older son is in a special education class. Few opportunities for supervised after-school entertainment exist. The playgrounds serve as headquarters for drug traffic. The family cannot afford to enroll the children in free programs because none are located near her and the cost of the bus fare is too high. The mother of this family tries to be a good parent, but her lack of marketable skills and the living conditions she and her children must endure have thwarted her attempts to build her family's self-sufficiency.

The two typical families that I have just presented reflect the trends that we are seeing today. Members of the Black middle class have been able to maintain an adequate standard of living. But, the low-income and working class families are losing the ability to care for themselves. Large numbers of Black children, a significant percentage of whom live in low-income families, face very hazardous living conditions. NBCDI's status report indicates that through the year 2010, the majority of Black children will be raised in female-headed households, will live in center cities, will dwell in neighborhoods where one-fifth or more of the residents have incomes below the poverty level, will not have access to regular medical care and will not graduate from college.

Additionally, disproportionately large numbers of African Americans have not been able to attain the skills necessary for self-sufficiency in America's current service economy. The resulting increases in levels of poverty have left an atmosphere of despair and depravity in many Black communities that used to thrive with legitimate activity. Where familial pride, hope, and aspirations of success used to dominate community values, we now find an inability to form viable family units; children without homes, some even without parents; and the rise in drug traffic and violence among Black male youth.

We must enact several initiatives to solve these problems. Too many in fact to discuss fully today. Therefore, I will focus on three of the most pressing issues that we must address.

The first priority is to help all families become economically independent. The decade of the 1980's saw a deepening inequality both in terms of family income and individual income. So much so that the assets of Whites households are ten times greater than the assets of Black households. Of the estimated 10 million African American children residing in the United States, almost half of them under the age of six are living in poverty, and 45 per cent of them under the age of 18 are poor.

America is such a wealthy nation that we should be able to ensure that all of our children live in suitable housing, wear proper clothing, eat decent meals, and receive medical care. However, instead of simply doling out these services and socially stigmatizing the victims of our nation's changing economy, we must place all families in positions to afford life's necessities. We must employ mechanisms—equal employment opportunities, job creation strategies, continued increases in the Earned Income Tax Credit—which will guarantee a more equitable distribution of our nation's wealth.

One of the first measures we can take is to guarantee that all parents supporting their families through public subsidies receive training that will provide them with skills valued in today's service economy. The federal government and the private sector should take a role of leadership in insuring the economic survival of families. We must help parents break the chains of poverty, which hamper the development of their children. Simply teaching women to type and file is no longer sufficient because these skills will not help them find jobs with the salary and benefits needed to support their families. Job training programs must incorporate training in technical fields, money management skills, and effective parenting education.

The second measure we need to take is to ensure that in every state throughout the union, AFDC benefits reflect regular cost-of-living increases and do not penalize families that are trying to remain intact or become self-sufficient. The erosion of welfare benefits in the 1980s severely affected low-income African American families. The children of these families, who are now growing up without male role models; in neighborhoods where the illegal trade of drugs provides one of the only ways to make money; and without access to health care, recreation, quality education, and the other necessities of childhood, are the innocent victims of these budget cuts. Families receiving AFDC must not be penalized because of the presence of a step-parent, minimal wage-earners, and children over the age of 18.

The second priority is to ensure that all low-income children have access to Early Childhood Education Programs. These programs can prevent children from experiencing later disappointment, frustration, and eventual withdrawal from social institutions.

Programs such as Head Start and its predecessor, the Perry Preschool Project, have demonstrated that developmentally appropriate and culturally sensitive early childhood education experiences can be the most significant intervention services that children from low-income families receive. Early childhood education programs serve as many children's first introduction to society outside the immediate family. Thus, these settings should provide children with the skills and experiences necessary for later success in school and life. Furthermore, parents, who can place their children in stable facilities, are able to work and provide their families with secure homes.

In a 1987 publication entitled *Safeguards: Guidelines for Establishing Programs for Four-Year-Olds in the Public Schools*, NCBEDI outlined and explained the criteria needed for guaranteeing that preschool-age Black children have positive early childhood education experiences. If we want Black children to start school ready to learn, we must work together to ensure that all children, regardless of parental income, receive quality early childhood education experiences. The 101st Congress's passage of the Head Start Reauthorization Act will ensure that all eligible children receive Head Start services, and the passage of the Child Care and Development Block Grant will increase available child care resources for low-income parents. This legislation presents many opportunities to provide low income Black children with enriching early childhood education experiences. However, we must make sure that these programs contain the principle elements of quality early childhood programming. Furthermore, we must make sure that all teachers working with our children are well-trained professionals who understand child development.

The third priority deals with developing effective strategies for handling the current drug crisis. The large numbers of Black children born exposed to drugs and HIV pose special challenges to our child welfare and medical systems. We can no longer rely upon stop-gap measures. We must find adoptive homes for the thousands of border babies throughout the country. Continuing to allow these fragile infants and toddlers to languish in hospital care will not only burden our medical resources, it will also provide us with a population of children whose special emotional handicaps we may not be able to serve. Thus, we must ensure that our child welfare services can adequately manage these children before their problems multiply beyond control.

I commend the recent Congressional legislation and initiatives toward improving the social services our children receive. Senate Bill 4, introduced earlier this week, addresses the severe impact that parental drug abuse has on children in the child welfare system and also includes viable and intensive family preservation, reunification, and follow-up services. Additionally, the 101st Congress's passage of the Hawkins Social Services Re-authorization and the McKinley Act Re-authorization will provide funds to encourage collaboration between housing assistance programs and child welfare services. These actions represent the first of many badly needed improvements in the child welfare system.

However, our children will still want for adequate services until our social workers are given realistic caseloads to manage and until coordination between social

service agencies ensures that families get the services that they need. We must cease viewing a child as a single entity. To promote the child's best interests, we must view children as integral parts of families. Therefore, the family must become the primary client within the child welfare system.

Economic inequality, drug usage, increasing violence, and lack of quality child care options may be stifling the prosperity of low income Black communities today. But if we take affirmative measures now, all Black children can grow up in loving, self-contained families and can enjoy a quality of life that surpasses what we presently have to offer.

Thank you.

Senator DODD. Judith, we appreciate your patience.

Ms. WALLERSTEIN. Good morning. My name is Judith Wallerstein. I am a clinical psychologist, and I have spent the last two decades of my life studying the effects of divorce on children and their parents.

Growing up in the United States has changed. While one of two first marriages breaks up, divorce is at 60 percent in remarriages where there are children from the first marriage.

In my own long-term study, one of two children experienced a second divorce during the 10-year period following the first one.

Just as startling is a finding from a national study that Dr. Zill has been involved in that 43 percent of all children surveyed had had no contact with their fathers from one to 5 years prior to the study. Thus marital disruption not only breaks up the family unit, but often effectively breaks contact between the child and the father.

Divorce is a wrenching experience for children. For children in middle class America, marital breakdown represents the major psychological, educational and economic threat of their growing up years.

While there is good reason, serious reason, for grave concern about children in poverty, it is important to recognize that the middle class child is at risk as well, and our proper agenda, in my view and in my findings, is all children at this time and all American families.

Children's initial reactions are often severe. Their perspective is entirely different from that of the adult. They see the divorce as the root cause of their problem, not as a remedy. Their initial reactions include a steep and not unrealistic rise in anxiety about who will take care of me during my growing up years. They fear being abandoned. They mourn the loss of the parent who has left the home. They worry intensely about the well-being of their parents—can my mom make it? They feel powerless, angry and exceedingly lonely.

Contrary to popular belief, many children are well-parented in families where one or both parents are very unhappy.

The most vulnerable group at the outset are young children, who often suffer major disruptions in their physical as well as their emotional care. Households become chaotic under the pressure of the crisis in the parents' lives, and preschool children are often newly-placed for many hours in day care facilities where people have no training and where the facilities are poorly-equipped to calm their panic or to individualize their needs. There is nothing in the curriculum of caregivers or of a great many other disciplines that prepares them for this kind of daily activity that they face.

Adolescents are also at great risk. The weakening of the family structure when sexual and aggressive drives intensify makes for their greater susceptibility to the siren calls of the street.

One 14 year-old girl told us that the worst thing about divorce was that there was no one home; there was no discipline and no rules—just an empty feeling—“that’s how I got into sex”—she could have said drugs, she could have said dropping out, she could have said anything.

Although many children weather the stress of family rupture and the postdivorce years without lasting detrimental consequences, children of divorce and remarriage are greatly over-represented in outpatient psychiatric, family agency and private practice populations. The representation of these youngsters is even higher in inpatient adolescent psychiatric population, standing in some instances at 75 and 80 percent—and in one well-known teaching hospital at one point at 100 percent.

National and local studies report a higher incidence of disrupted learning, of erratic attendance, higher dropout rate, increased tardiness, and deteriorated social behavior, especially among boys, at all school levels.

In a middle class high school, we conducted a study last year of the freshman and sophomore classes, and no single boy—we compared high-achieving kids with underachieving youngsters in both of those classes—and no single boy in the high-achieving group came from a nonintact family. Two-thirds of the children in the underachieving group from middle class population in suburbia came from nonintact families.

Serious long-term effects are evident in my work. I have followed 131 children from well-educated middle class families, 10 to 15 years following the separation. Adolescence represents a period of particular difficulty for these youngsters. Issues of identification, of morality, of separation and leaving home are especially difficult. Feeling rejected by the father at this critical developmental time is often associated with depression and low self-esteem.

Delayed effects of parental divorce become most visible at young adulthood, as the young person attempts to establish a committed relationship and fears that the failure of the parents, reinforced by the unavailability of one or both parents during growing up years will be repeated in his or her own life.

Young women suffer with what I have called the “sleepier effect”—worry intensely about being abandoned or betrayed in their relationships. These concerns may seriously derail the young woman’s development, leading to early, impulsive marriages, intense sexual activity, and phobias about being alone.

One leading demographer reports that the incidence of separation and divorce is 60 percent higher among female children of parental divorce than in children of intact marriage; that is an extraordinary finding, Senator.

Half of the young people in my study enter adulthood as worried, underachieving, self-deprecating, sometimes angry young men and women. It appears that for many young people, parental divorce during their early years can become fixed as an inner template of man-woman relationships and that despair about achieving lasting relationships may emerge at entry into young adulthood and domi-

nate their relationships during the third decade of life. This is a new and very troublesome finding——

Senator DODD. Could you repeat that, please?

Ms. WALLERSTEIN. The issue that there is an inner template of what is expectable in a man-woman relationship that remains in the young person during their growing up years, and this becomes prominent when the man-woman relationships move center stage, when they enter young adulthood, and at that point, the "ghosts", so to speak, rise from the basement, the memories increase, dreams increase, and so on, and these young people spend really a lot of their time in their twenties being concerned and very troubled about how will I be able to deal with relationships with the opposite sex, and obviously, this is the point of formation of the new family. So we are looking at a legacy that I did not expect when I followed these young people and that is startling and troublesome and does not lend itself to a clear—it is a very complex issue, but nevertheless I think does place the problem in a proper perspective.

Economic decline is serious in itself but also conveys a psychological message to the child of his or her secondary place or relative unimportance to the outside parent. My findings also show, Senator, the severe and unjust disadvantaging of these young people from initially middle class or even initially very affluent families as they reach age 18. Most of the young people in my study received no help from their fathers or stepfathers toward college tuition or expenses, although relationships were cordial or even friendly. This is also surprising.

The psychologic factors that influence outcome in the divorced family include at least one responsible nurturant parent-child relationship, and indeed one can surely have that in a single-parent family; diminished conflict between the parents, and feelings of not having been abandoned by either parent, and an overall sense that the parents have made a rational decision in opting for divorce and have been able reasonably to reconstruct their lives.

The child of divorce is poorly protected within each of these domains by virtue of the enormous emotional and economic overload on the custodial parent, and the almost complete absence of guidance or programs for both parents if they select joint custody, for guidance for the visiting parent.

This has not been a time of a great deal of local experimentation, Senator. This has not been a time of expansion of local programs. Court services offer mediation programs which hardly provide information that would enable parents to make an informed decision and provide no help in the implementation of the decisions they do make.

There are few programs in schools that do help children, but they don't address any of the family issues. And I speak with some knowledge about this because in our own work at the center that I direct, the Center for the Family in Transition, we have been astonishingly successful at maintaining father-child bonds and in strengthening parent-child relationships; but this is because of a vigorous outreach program to parents at the time of the divorce filing. Every parent in the county gets a letter from us, inviting

them to make use of services, and we try to provide education and counseling. This is funded by private foundations.

Finally, the weakening of the family structure has been reinforced by the inadequacy of services for children in recreational facilities, in afterschool care, in high-quality child care, in the near disappearance of psychological services within the schools, and in an issue familiar to you, Senator—in the relative inflexibility of the workplace to family needs.

So that, tragically for the American child, at the same time that the family has weakened in its child rearing and protecting functions, other child- and adolescent-serving institutions in our society have weakened as well. These are but some of the complex issues that we and our children face today.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Wallerstein follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JUDITH WALLERSTEIN

My name is Judith Wallerstein. I hold a Ph.D. in clinical psychology. I am a senior lecturer at the School of Social Welfare, University of California at Berkeley. The last two decades of my professional life have been devoted to the study or the effects of divorce on children and their parents.

Additionally, I have been actively engaged in the development of educational programs and clinical services designed to prevent or ameliorate the detrimental effects of marital rupture. My work is known widely to professional colleagues in the fields of mental health, law, pediatrics, and education, and to the general public through the popular media. My most recent book, entitled *Second Chances: Men, Women and Children a Decade After Divorce*, which, reflecting the widespread concern, became a best seller in 1989. It is the longest-lasting study of children in divorced families, and the only research that follows the children into young adulthood.

Since 1980, I have served as executive director of the Center for the Family in Transition, a nonprofit agency established by private foundations as a result of the publication of findings from the first 5 years of my study. The mandate of the Center is to generate knowledge and develop interventions that can significantly reduce the emotional casualties of divorce. The Center, which is the only such facility in the United States, is located in the San Francisco Bay area, and serves more divorcing families than any other agency.

Growing up in the United States has changed. The number of children from divorced families more than doubled between 1960 and 1980 (1). Divorce began its steep rise in the early seventies and leveled off at a high plateau a decade later. Thirty percent of all American children lived in separated, divorce or remarried families throughout the eighties (2). Demographers estimate that 38 percent of all children born in the mid-eighties will experience the divorce of their parents before the children reach the age of 18, there is little reason to expect these figures to change significantly (3).

Although divorce is rising throughout the industrialized and industrializing world, the United States leads all countries with the startling statistic that one of two marriages breaks up (3). Just as startling is the finding from a national study that 43 percent of children surveyed had had no contact with their fathers from 1 to 5 years prior to the study (4). Thus, marital disruption not only breaks up the family unit, but also, in a great many instances, effectively breaks the ongoing relationship between the child and the biological parent living outside the home.

There is some evidence of intergenerational transmission of marital instability. One leading demographer has found that separation and/or divorce for white, female children of divorce was 60 percent higher than that for white females from intact families. The divorce rate for white male children of divorce was 35 percent higher than for white male children from intact families (5).

Divorce is a wrenching experience for many adults and almost all children. The child's perspective is entirely different from that of the adult. Children rarely welcome the divorce, even when they are intensely aware of the marital unhappiness. By and large, they see the divorce, not the marital discord, as the root cause of their own distress. For children in middle-class America, marital breakdown represents the major threat of their growing-up years (6).

Children's initial reactions include a steep rise in anxiety, particularly in fears of being abandoned by both parents; mourning over the loss of the parent who has left the home; worry over the well-being of one or both parents; feelings of powerlessness, anger, loyalty conflicts, and guilt. Contrary to popular belief, many children are well-parented in families where one or both parents are unhappy. Also contrary to popular belief, many children have no idea that their parents are planning to divorce, until one parent leaves the home. The most vulnerable groups at the outset are preschool children, who often suffer major disruptions in their physical care, as households become chaotic under the pressure of the crisis in the parents' lives, and as children are placed for many hours in daycare facilities that are ill-equipped to individualize their needs. Adolescents are also at grave risk at the time of the breakup. The weakening of the family structure at this critical time in their lives, when sexuality and aggression intensify, makes for their greater vulnerability. One adolescent girl told us, "The worst thing about divorce was that there was no one home. There was no discipline and no rules, just an empty feeling. That's how I got into sex" (6).

Although many children weather the stress of family rupture without detrimental consequences, and in fact, many develop early independence and are extremely helpful to struggling parents, a considerable number falter along the way. Divorce has a notable effect on the make-up of clinical populations. Children of divorce are greatly overrepresented in outpatient psychiatric, family agency and private practice populations (7). Parental divorce significantly predicts mental health referrals for elementary school-age children (8). A national survey of adolescents whose parents had divorced before the children were 7 years old found that 30 percent of those young people had received psychotherapy by the time they had reached adolescence compared with 10 percent of adolescents in intact families (9). The representation of children from divorced families is even higher among inpatient adolescent psychiatric populations (10).

Several studies show that children of divorce experience lower achievement and have greater difficulty in learning than their classmates from two-parent families. National surveys report a higher incidence of disrupted learning, erratic attendance, higher dropout rates, increased tardiness, and deteriorated social behavior especially among boys from nonintact families (11).

The long-term effects as seen in my own work show unexpected difficulties that these young people experience at adolescence and later. The need for the father increases in both boys and girls at adolescence and feeling rejected by the father at this critical developmental time may pose special dangers for both sexes. Delayed effects of parental divorce become most visible at young adulthood, as the young person attempts to establish a committed relationship and fears that the failure or the parents will be repeated in his or her own life. Young woman, suffering with what I have called "a sleeper effect," worry intensely about being abandoned and/or betrayed in romantic relationships. There is further evidence from my work that marital violence witnessed by children during their early years can become fixed as a template of man-woman relationships, and that patterns of violence in their own relationships may emerge at entry into young adulthood. Those findings are fully in accord with the views of many young adults who speak of their parents' divorce as the central formative experience of their growing-up years (6).

There is a mix of psychological and economic factors that governs whether these young people do well or poorly over the postdivorce years. Economic factors are critical. Despite the improvement in collection of child support, there continues to be a serious economic decline for many children following divorce, in part because the levels at which child support are set are far too low. These issues have been amply documented by my colleagues in sociology and economics. My own findings show the severe disadvantaging of these young people from initially middle-class, or even affluent families, as they reach age 18 and the father's obligation for child support comes to an end. Their educational opportunities are sharply and unjustly curtailed (12).

The psychological factors that affect outcome in the divorced family include a nurturant parent-child relationship with at least one parent, diminished conflict between the parents, feelings of not having been abandoned emotionally or physically by either parent, and an overall sense that the parents have made a rational decision in opting for divorce and have been able to reconstruct their lives. Within the remarried family, the child needs to feel welcomed and included within the orbit of family life (6).

Tragically, this large population of children and parents has been very poorly served in their needs for guidance and support. Court services consist largely of mediation programs, which address disputes between parents but rarely provide infor-

mation that would enable parents to make informed decisions about custody or visitation. Moreover, they fail to help parents implement the decisions they do make. A few programs, consisting in the main of time-limited groups of children in the schools, are indeed helpful in undoing the child's loneliness and worry, but fail to address the continuing stresses found within the family (13). Support groups for adults often fail to address child-related issues. Our own work at the Center for the Family in Transition has been astonishingly successful in maintaining the father-child bond, but this is in part because of a vigorous outreach to parents at the time of the divorce filing (14).

The weakening of the family structure and the greater unreliability of relationships that the child witnesses during his or her growing-up years have been reinforced by the unavailability or the diminution in services for children in afterschool care, in good high quality individualized child care, in the near disappearance of psychological services within the schools. Thus, tragically for the American child, at the same time that the family has become less stable, other child and adolescent-serving institutions in our society have weakened as well, perhaps it is in strengthening these institutions, as well as in dealing with economic issues that protect the family, that the Federal Government can make a major contribution to stabilizing the lives of children. Additionally, the Federal Government can exercise leadership by funding demonstration projects, by providing a clearing house for programs, by funding studies that can inform public policy, and by raising the consciousness of society to the needs of the modern family.

Senator DODD. Thank you very, very much for some very important and revealing data.

You have all been extremely helpful in your testimony; each one of you has made a significant contribution here this morning, and I want to thank you all for your willingness to be here and share with us your various comments and thoughts.

What I'd like to try and do here—these hearings have a tendency to be very formal—is to open this up. You are all experts in your own right, and you have heard each other and the things you have had to say. I have some questions, but I'd like if any of you have questions for each other, that can be helpful as well to act in a sense as almost staff, if you will. So I'd like to encourage a little informality and interchange among yourselves, having listened to some of these pieces of information.

Judith, just a comment or concern, as I was making notes listening to you. I was wondering about some of your data about the children of divorced or separated parents when the divorce occurs. For example, you are talking about adolescence and given the problems associated with that even under the strongest of family situations—if the parents divorce when that child is an infant or in the formative years, those earlier years, is there a different reaction in adolescence than to the divorce that occurs simultaneously with adolescence?

Ms. WALLERSTEIN. Well, the child who I find most at risk were—let me just say first that it is not the event of the divorce, it is the postdivorce years and the difficulties in the postdivorce years that really seem to have an impact. So that for youngsters where the divorce occurs just prior to their entry to adolescence, where the family weakens just at the time when for lack of a better word, the voices of the street are calling, and all the stresses of adolescence, these youngsters seem to be the most vulnerable.

But in terms of the children who develop the most symptoms and seem to really go to pieces at that time—but it is a short period—the very young children, where the physical care disrupts so often, develop a lot of sleep problems and develop all kinds of difficulties because the disruption of physical care is so difficult for them.

But I am very concerned about these youngsters on the verge of adolescence or in early adolescence at the time.

Senator DODD. Let me ask you something else. Sara, you talked about the support and the fact that now that in some areas we are collecting it out of the paychecks and so forth, that it is not a question of men not being able to pay support, they just weren't doing it. You mentioned, Judith, the problem of fathers who are not contributing to higher educational costs. You mentioned stepfathers, but let's focus for a second on the divorcing parent.

Courts award custody to mothers—by and large, and although that is changing somewhat, statistically the highest rates of custody go to the mothers. Men are getting visitation rights, maybe 1 weekend a month, or a vacation, or rotating holidays, or Wednesday nights. But there is tremendous hostility that you hear about among men, who feel as though they have basically been entirely cut off, except for these occasional appearances or visitations where they get to see the children for a few hours, a couple of nights, every 2 weeks or so. So what you are seeing in this failure to pay support, failure to contribute to higher education, is not an economic circumstance, but something deeper than that.

I am wondering if any of the data or any of the examination of these issues confirms that, or is that really not the case?

Ms. WALLERSTEIN. I'd like to speak to that, and then I'd like to hear what Sara has to say. I would like to say that part of the issue that has not been recognized is how difficult it is to be a visiting parent or an outside parent—and in a way, that is what you are suggesting these men are complaining about. It is often associated with the woman's anger. I find it much less associated, Senator, with the woman's anger; most of the women I see would welcome some relief, would welcome having the father arrive on a weekend, regularly, and so on.

I think it is a very difficult role for the father, and it is a difficult role for the child. I really think one could cut down enormously on the amount of abandonment that goes on if one were able to help these men—we do this every day of the week, and as I said, we have enormous success with it—if one can get in there right after the separation. Timing is everything in this; if one lets it go for a whole lot of years, then one can't influence this. But the difficulty for a father of picking his children up at the home that he has left—and in most divorces, the woman has taken the initiative in asking for the divorce—and picking his children up at the threshold—sometimes he has built that home—and the difficulty of saying goodbye to his children week after week or every 2 weeks, the difficulty of will they want to see and won't they want to see me, would he rather go to little league, would she rather go out with her boyfriend. It is a very difficult role.

When you stop to think about it, there is no preparation for this in the intact family. There is no counterpart to a visiting father's role in any other family structure, and people are totally unprepared for all the difficulty involved, and they do feel they have a peripheral role; they are sort of like a minister without a portfolio.

Senator DODD. And dreadful discipline and nutritional problems—again, who is going to be the popular parent.

Ms. WALLERSTEIN. Exactly.

Senator DODD. So it is offering the biggest toys, or who can financially offer more, or stuffing junk food down their faces because you can get away with it, staying up later, watching programs that your mother wouldn't let you watch or the reverse, and then feeling the guilt of having not been a good disciplinarian. But you've got 2 days or whatever it is, so you're not going to waste the time being a disciplinarian, and having that child leave resenting you and not wanting to come back the next weekend, or whenever the next visitation period occurs.

Ms. WALLERSTEIN. Yes. The whole central strategy of joint custody is whether the woman can call up the father and say, "Jimmy, you're going to spend next week with your daddy, and he's going to do this, and he's going to do that, and he's going to take you here and take you there"—to ease these transitions. And there is no preparation, there is no help to families in easing these transitions for the adults or for the child.

Senator DODD. Sara, you suggested the idea of this minimum—what did you call it—

Ms. McLANAHAN. Minimum benefit.

Senator DODD. [Continuing]. The minimum benefit package, where the government would come in and make up the difference. I don't need to tell you the kind of difficulty we'd have with that, just putting aside the questions that it poses, in terms of the fiscal difficulties. But in a sense, it is important that that child can at some point in his life look back and know that the father—in most cases the father, although in a growth number of cases the mother—was actually there, contributing.

I am wondering if by recognizing the immediate needs, the economic needs which we are trying to satisfy here, whether we are losing something else. The deep resentments, longer-standing problems that Judith has talked about may show that we are taking care of the short-term economic problem at the price of deepening psychological difficulties those children will have as they become parents. Looking at the statistics that already exist, about 60 percent of those children—which is unbelievable—

Ms. WALLERSTEIN. The girls.

Senator DODD. —of females. What about boys?

Ms. WALLERSTEIN. Thirty-five percent.

Ms. McLANAHAN. Well, I think we all agree that it is not just income, and I think the evidence that the children in remarried families are also doing very poorly is again evidence that it is not just money.

But money is the single most—at least in the kind of datasets that I analyzed—is the single most important factor that we have been able to measure and identify.

Let me just say one thing about the minimum benefit. If you think of the minimum benefit as a new subsidy, obviously, people would back away; but if you think of it as a substitute for welfare, then there have actually been estimates that show that you can save money because what the welfare system is now doing is providing a fairly low, in some States, benefit and then basically telling the mother she can't work.

Senator DODD. What is Aid to Families with Dependent Children, AFDC. That to me is basically what we are talking about here.

Ms. McLANAHAN. Well, when we initially passed AFDC—or ADC, as it was called then—most single parents were widows, and we did not expect them to work. It was in the late 1930's. We wanted the mother to stay home and take care of her children. We also thought that we were very soon going to move to where survivor's insurance would be supporting that family, so ADC was seen as a very temporary program. And in fact, survivor's insurance is a very generous program. Widowed single mothers are rarely poor.

What has happened now is that mothers are in the labor force, and married women are working. So now we are left with this residue of a program that was designed to encourage mothers to stay home, and in fact taxed their wages at 100 percent.

So I think that the Family Support Act is trying to do something about that and to move in that direction, and I think the assured benefit would be—it doesn't have to be at something like \$3,000 a year, like New York State is doing; it could be just \$1,500 guaranteed floor—but what it does do is it allows the single mother to take the chance of leaving welfare, going and getting a job, and trying to piece together some child support payments, some sort of guaranteed floor, some sort of health care. With a number of small pieces of support, she can actually become independent or at least leave this sort of 100 percent dependency situation that she is in.

Senator DODD. Let me ask you, Mr. Harrington and Mr. Zill, to comment on that, and of course, it goes, Sherry, to what you were talking about with independence being one of the themes of your priorities, and I'd like you to comment as well.

Paul.

Mr. HARRINGTON. Senator Dodd, not to diminish what the other witnesses have said, but I think it is very important to note that a major reason why the fraction of children who are living with a single parent has risen is that most of that gain has occurred among women who have never been married. What has been happening is divorce rates have basically stayed the same; birth rates have not changed very much, but marriage rates have fallen very sharply.

So I guess what I am suggesting is maybe a two-pronged strategy along the lines that some of the witnesses, Professor McLanahan and the like, have suggested. But I think there is another set of strategies that has to be designed to think about how can we bolster the marriage rates of young men and young women in the United States.

In the State of Connecticut, the wealthiest State in the country, out-of-wedlock birth rates now are in excess of one-quarter of all live births. If we can't reverse that trend through what I view as a set of wage and labor force policies that can bolster the earnings of young men and women, we are going to have a very, very difficult time implementing the kinds of aid programs that have been suggested.

Senator DODD. Mr. Zill.

Mr. ZILL. I think the concern that you expressed about is there something else here in the fathers not paying support and the issue of wanting to have control is an important one, and I think we have to monitor as we implement the garnishing of wages exactly

what happens, whether that in some cases does increase conflict and lead to some negative things that we don't want to occur.

But I think it is imperative for all parents—all men who help to produce children—that they have a sense of parental responsibility, that if you help to produce a child, you are going to help to support the child. In most cases, it is not a question of great guilt or conflict; it is a question that the guys get away with it, and they don't have to pay and they have the resources.

But I think we also have to pay attention to what Sherry was talking about, and those are the men who are not part of the regular labor force, who in many cases are the fathers of the unmarried mothers. I don't think the Family Support Act really pays much attention to them at all.

I think one of the very interesting proposals that Sarah and her husband, Irv Garfinckel, were suggesting was some sort of a guarantee that for the low-skill male who is the father of a child out of marriage that the government would say, "You are going to provide support, and if you don't have a job, we are going to guarantee you a job, a minimum-wage job, but you are going to have to do something to help support that child." This is the notion of combining a work program with a child support program and paying more attention to the fathers who, in many of the pages of the Family Support Act, barely exist. I think we need to do something along those lines.

Senator DODD. Sherry.

Ms. DEANE. Actually, I think it is important when we talk about the single-parent family that in fact we do disaggregate the data that speaks to those parents who have never been married and those who were previously married.

Senator DODD. Good point.

Ms. DEANE. I think there are policy implications, and Nick has already spoken about trying to bring into the loop fathers who have not married the mothers.

But if I may, I would just like to talk to Paul because I would like to have some clarification of some point that he raised. And I guess it is a point of clarification because I believe I heard you speak to the fact that with respect to full employment and poverty, there were really no strong, direct correlations so that the full employment strategies would in fact be different from the poverty strategies.

I'd like you to speak to that, number one, and number two, you really seemed to emphasize the family structure, the single parent phenomenon, as being perhaps what we should look at and the basis of the decline in terms of family income and in terms of poverty. But I would also like you to speak to the access to employment opportunities with meaningful wages for both men and women that should be part of that equation as well as what you did refer to, which was the fundamental changes in the nature of the labor market, because I believe those two together may be just as significant as the changes we are seeing in the family structure.

Mr. HARRINGTON. Those are terrific questions. First off, the links between poverty and unemployment aren't very strong simply because there are two different groups of individuals and families suffering from different problems.

In the States of Massachusetts and Connecticut, six out of ten unemployed workers in the State now are people who have been job losers, laid off, collecting unemployment insurance benefits right now. But when we look at the composition of the poor in those States, these are individuals who have not successfully overcome barriers to labor market participation—problems such as child care, low basic skills, poor levels of educational attainment.

So that strategies designed to solve problems of unemployment particularly in those States, direct job creation, will have very, very little impact on influencing fundamental and more structural problems of poverty and income inadequacy, which in our view is really related to the changing job content of the economy where two things are going on.

One is that as we generate the service sector growth, the demand for professional, technical and managerial workers has risen rapidly. About 55 percent of all jobs created in the United States between 1979 and 1989 were professional, technical, managerial and high-level sales, a shorthand way to collar the college labor market. That is why, despite the fact the number of young kids is down, college enrollments in 1989 were at an all-time high. If you want to make it in America, if you want to get a job that can support a family, the new American economy is now in essence demanding a college degree.

During that same period of time, manufacturing and construction employment, particularly during the current economic recession, has fallen very, very sharply. Virtually all the job loss has been in blue-collar jobs, which traditionally hire high school graduates and high school dropouts.

So as a consequence what we are seeing happen is that high school graduates and dropouts lose access to jobs, and college graduates continue to get access to jobs; and the earnings gaps and income gaps that we talked about earlier rise as a result of that fundamental economic change.

I believe the net result of this—and there are two excellent studies that have been done on this, one by a fellow named William Julius Wilson at the University of Chicago, the second done by a fellow named Andrew Sum, who is my colleague with Northeastern University, which he did with the Children's Defense Fund—what both of them ended up saying is that, look, if you want to understand why marriage rates are dropping, it is really resulting in declining earnings of young men. Between 1973 and 1986, the average young guy out of high school in this country had earnings declines of about 25 percent. So a guy in 1986, age 20-29 earned about one-quarter less than his counterpart in 1973.

The sad thing is for a high school dropout during that period of time, the earnings fell by 40 percent. For young black men between 1973 and 1986, on average, their earnings fell somewhere around 50 percent.

So that what both Wilson and Sum have argued I think in a very powerful way is that as to the marriageability of these young guys, their earnings capacities have just diminished so tremendously that marriage rates drop, and for many of these kids, and now young adults, as Ms. Wallerstein said, they are stuck in a permanent adolescence as they move into their postteen years.

Senator DODD. That's interesting.

Yes?

Mr. ZILL. I don't quite agree with that. I think you have to look at the differences—for example, I think there are cultural factors, and I think there have been changes in attitudes.

Look at Hispanics, for example, as opposed to blacks. Hispanics face the same labor market conditions, and yet they have much higher rates of continued marriage, even despite the earnings difficulties they have. And you are talking now about 60 percent of black children being born outside of marriage. That is much bigger than can be explained by the economic changes that have been just described. We are also facing some real changes in attitudes and values.

I think the American public generally is very ambivalent in all these areas. I think we all want our freedom, we want our personal fulfillment, but we also have a sense that we are doing wrong when we divorce and perhaps scar our children.

We have experimented a lot with alternative forms, with communes, with serial monogamy, it has been called, and none of those experiments has been a particularly notable success. The "brave new world" that Valerie Harper was mentioning is not on the horizon. So I think we have to perhaps take another look at some traditional virtues—although they sound so old-fashioned—such as sacrifice, and sometimes not reaching all one's personal fulfillment in exchange for thinking about the long-term and thinking of our next generation.

I think there is a role for both private leadership and public leadership in playing a "bully pulpit" kind of role and saying that family and family stability is important, is a basic building block of our society, and we need to encourage that. It is not going to produce a miracle—it is not going to make the divorce rate go down to zero—but I think that the more information that we have and the more that people understand that their decisions do have ramifications for their young people and for our society generally, I think we can produce changes.

I think we have seen some changes, for example, in the drug area when we had convincing evidence that drug use could be harmful; young people have changed their behavior gradually. So I think this kind of information can make a difference.

Senator DODD. Yes. It is a little more difficult to sell. We were talking about divorce, and I think you are absolutely correct in pointing out that a lot of people who are talking about it here have never been married, so it becomes an almost pointless discussion to some degree. But I'd like to come back to it because the idea of many States with no-fault—in fact I guess most States have no-fault divorce laws today—

Ms. WALLERSTEIN. All do.

Senator DODD. [Continuing]. All do—that there is a waiting period, I understand, from the time one files until the no-fault divorce is granted. In your case, Judith, I imagine the people who respond to the letters you send out are those who already have a pretty good handle on it; I mean, the fact that they are responding to you indicates that they have already given it some thought. The problem is the crowd that doesn't respond. Obviously, it's nothing

you do at the Federal level because these are all State laws, but to require some sort of counseling period in here about children. In divorce, as we have all heard over and over again, the courts talk about the best interests of the child, but rarely have they ever brought up, except in a support payment case or custody case, the matter of how those parents are going to deal caring for their children. You point out, I think, a very good point. All of a sudden asking one of these partners to take on a role for which there has been no training, no background, no preparation whatsoever is very, very difficult.

I wonder if any of you might offer some suggestions on what could be done at this level to try and encourage something along those lines—and some places are doing it, I guess, but not enough is happening.

Yes, Sarah.

Ms. McLANAHAN. I think that there already is a very important change going on. I think the first thing is to get the information out. All during the Seventies—there are still people today who are claiming there really is nothing wrong with divorce for children—during the Seventies, that was very much the banner cry. So first, we need to get the information out.

Second, I think that society is shifting now toward saying to parents if you bear a child you are going to have some obligation to that child, at least until it is 18. I think the Family Support Act says that by strengthening the child support system.

I think in the old days the idea was that there were sort of serial marriages and serial parenthood, so okay, you change wives, and you can also change parents for the children, and whoever the mother marries next will be the father, and that person should support the child. I think people thought that that would sort of work. Well, of course, it doesn't work because for one thing, people are not remarrying, and second because stepfathers don't have the degree of commitment or attachment that a biological father does.

So I think that in part we just need to go further and strengthen that notion that we say to parents you have the right to divorce—and obviously we are not going to stop people from divorcing, although perhaps we could make them wait and think about it a little longer—but I think society can say you cannot divorce your children because it is in society's interest to protect the child.

And I think when parents realize they can't divorce their children, they can't just trade them in, that that may also affect their behavior in terms of even getting the divorce. If you know when you get divorced that you are not going to be able to just completely get a whole new family and go off, that you are going to have to work things out with that mother to see the child and to have the visitation—and the mother should know this, too.

Senator DODD. I was talking about that just last evening with staff in preparation for this hearing. In fact, we went off and had a long discussion about just that question alone, trying to get people to realize that with children involved, you are going to be with that partner you are divorcing for the rest of your life, one way or another.

Ms. McLANAHAN. I'd like to say something just in defense of the fathers, too—you mentioned the fathers' rights groups and the visitation problems.

One thing I have heard many single mothers say is that for all the problems they have, the one good thing about being a single parent is that you are the boss; you make all the decisions—you have all the responsibilities, but you have all the power. And I think there is going to be some resistance among mothers and divorced women who have had all of the power with respect to the children—they haven't had any money, but they have had all the decisionmaking power—they are going to have to give some of that up, and there is going to be a conflict over that.

But if you are going to order fathers to pay, then you are going to have to give them certain rights that go along with those obligations.

Senator DODD. Yes, Judith.

Ms. WALLERSTEIN. I think the whole underlying assumption of no-fault divorce was that things would continue—that it would be a civilized arena, people wouldn't have to hire private detectives and so on, and that things would go along, and the parent-child relationship would continue as it had been—and there was almost no consideration at that time, which I think is fascinating, of whether there would be any effect or any change on children. It shows how little we were able to predict what would happen.

It is quite clear to me that parenting changes very much following divorce. The mother-child relationship changes, the father-child relationship changes, and we are asking people to undertake roles for which they really need a lot of help and for which they have no preparation.

California has had no problem with asking people to come to mandatory mediation. I see no problem from my point of view in asking people to come to one or more—but certainly one—educational session which would help them make an informed decision and might then open up the opportunities to raise these questions as to how this family is different from the family that went before.

I think without that we are really not in any way protecting our children.

Senator DODD. Good point.

Well, I feel badly in a way because I could literally go all day with you here. You have raised some very provocative points.

Sherry, I am impressed with your three priorities and goals. We had a meeting a few weeks ago in Connecticut with African American leadership from across the State—clergy, business people, labor, legislators, mayors, city council people, and so forth—and tried to come up with an agenda that I could work with down here that we thought was important in Connecticut. The one issue, the word—in fact, it struck me; I thought maybe you had snuck into the meeting up there, or had some inside information—but the one word that we decided on was “independence”, whether it is independence in terms of home ownership, independence instead of not just looking for work but becoming people who employ people, not just people looking for jobs, or independence in terms of education. But the key word was “independence”. That was an extremely important element that we decided would be the top agenda item.

Ms. DEANE. And with respect to the poor families, ensuring their movement to self-sufficiency.

Senator DODD. Yes, because I have a feeling, going back to the point that Paul was talking about—and economics play a big role in it—but it is also one's perception of oneself. And I think if you consider yourself to be a dependent individual, regardless of what your earnings may be, if you are dependent, you don't have the self-esteem to be a provider for yourself let alone for other people, so it becomes a rather difficult position to start from. Whereas if you have a sense that you are an independent, self-supporting individual, then the perception of your ability to be able to support and assist others is an easy transition. If you haven't drawn the first conclusion about yourself you are never going to make the second one in terms of looking at your future, if you look down the path and you say, hell, I'm not going to be able to take care of myself, what the hell, I can't take care of anybody else.

Ms. DEANE. I suppose the real tragedy of living in poverty, regardless of race, is that it results in diminished dreams and diminished opportunities and diminished options. So while we have to focus in on raising self-esteem, at the same time we have to have in place policies that ensure that people, if their self-esteem is raised, will still have the opportunity to enter into a labor market where they can make meaningful wages which will then allow them to support their families.

Senator DODD. I don't disagree with you at all on that; in fact, I am in total agreement with you on it. I've got to tell you as well—and the point you were making, Mr. Zill, I also agree with—I think there are characteristics and values and so forth out there that I can write bills, pass amendments, create policies on until I am blue in the face. Government can play a leadership role in promoting these ideas and trying to encourage others to absorb them and to adopt them—but these two are intertwined, and one without the other is a nonstarter in many ways.

We can sit here and hold this hearing, and I presume there will be a few reporters who will write about it, and maybe some of the journalists will follow this things—but one show called "Rhoda" in which you focus attention on some of these questions can have a much more profound impact. That is the kind of world we are living today in terms of people's attitudes. So people in the media and in the entertainment industry and others who are willing to start writing scripts and creating programming and creating role models and heroes and so forth that embrace these values that we talked about earlier can play a tremendous role in our society. That is just a commentary on the times, and I think we all recognize it.

You have been extremely generous. Some of you have come a great distance to be here, and I am deeply appreciative of your willingness to come forward this morning. And this is not a one-time event. We had, as we pointed out, some nice successes last year, but we just scratched the surface. But that is more than we've done in 25 years, frankly, around here, so I'll accept the scratches, and we're going to dig in a little deeper this year.

We really need your involvement, and I mean that—that's not just a gratuitous comment—so we want you to maintain an ongoing

ing, close relationship with the staff here, and let us know your thoughts and ideas.

Some of the areas we are going to get into are very touchy. You start fooling around with divorce issues, and you are really hitting some very raw nerves. I mean, I was even reluctant to talk about men, and these things they don't like to talk about, like support payments and other obligations, financial and otherwise, but they are there, they are out there, and we might as well admit it. They are there, and we've got to just take it on, head-on, and see if we can't craft some ideas here that don't necessarily evolve into legislation, but really encourage others to do things that will promote certain values that are absolutely essential.

And this is the hub of the wheel; this is it. This is the center of it, and the things that we've been talking about here this morning really are the essence and will be the determining factors, in my view, about whether or not this country, if you want to talk about it just in those terms—we can talk about it in global terms—but whether this country has any success or any ability to grapple with the problems of the 21st century; this is it. If we drop the ball on this decade and these questions, we may make it because we have been blessed as a Nation, but it will be complete fortuity. It will not be because we planned it and thought about it and made intelligent choices. And as far as I'm concerned—I don't know how much longer any one of us will get to do anything in this world any longer—but to me, this is the central reason for my being here; this is it. The other questions are important, but this is what I am going to put my time in on whatever distance I have left in this business; this is it. To me, the rest of the stuff will resolve itself one way or another.

So I thank you all for being here.

Mr. HARRINGTON. Thank you for your leadership in this area, Senator.

Senator DODD. I appreciate your saying so.

Our last panel, our patient panel—I have been listening, and I want to note particularly the Connecticut children have been the quietest throughout all of this, and it must be because of the environment in our State and so forth. [Laughter.]

But you have been wonderful to wait this long. I hope it has been interesting for you to hear some of these things.

I'm going to ask Regina and Jim Lones from Meriden, CT to join us at the table, and Kathleen Scofield from Baltimore, MD. Kathleen, we thank you as well for coming. I was teasing—look who we've got here—you have been very quiet as well in the back of the room. Come on up. Who is that, Kathleen, that you have with you? Who is this pair of eyes I see peering over the top of the table?

Ms. SCOFIELD. This is Ernie.

Senator DODD. Hi, Ernie.

And Mr. Lones, who are these little characters you've got with you?

Mr. LONES. Allison and Tyler.

Senator DODD. Well, we are glad you made it—Kathleen, I understand you had a little difficulty getting over here this morning with bad weather and so forth. We are honored that all of you made it down this morning to talk about what it's like for families

trying to make it. You have had an opportunity to listen to some of the experts and people who work on these problems every day; they work with numbers and data and studies, going on for years—in the case of Judith Wallerstein, she is going on 15 years of following the same people, which is a remarkable effort and really worthwhile. That kind of data can be tremendously helpful.

Regina and Jim, I know you've got a statement, as Kathleen does. Why don't you share that with us, and then we'll ask you, Kathleen, for yours. And we want you all to relax and feel comfortable here. We are honored that you have been willing to come forward and talk to us about the kinds of things you are dealing with.

STATEMENTS OF: REGINA AND JIM LONES, WITH ALLISON AND TYLER, MERIDEN, CT; AND KATHLEEN SCOFIELD AND SON, ERNIE, ACCOMPANIED BY THERESA THOMAS, BALTIMORE, MD

Mr. LONES. Thank you very much for inviting us down here today. I hope that what we say will be of some benefit.

My name is Jim Lones. My wife Regina and I live in Meriden, CT, with Allison, who is 3 years old, and Tyler, who is about 5 months. We decided we wanted to live in New England, particularly in Connecticut, so we would be centralized between our two families. We had a desire to keep our parents active in their grandchildren's lives as they were growing up.

But in order to live where we do, we found it a financial necessity that both of us work full-time. Regina is an occupational therapist working in a psychiatric hospital with long-term care adolescents. I am a computer programmer/analyst.

Both Allison and Tyler are in a day care setting, not in a home setting. One of the things that we were thinking about was sick care. When Allison and Tyler are sick, one of us is required to take the time off and stay home with them. In my situation, although I have unlimited personal time, and it is not a policy of the company that this time be made up, it is shall we say strongly recommended that any time taken for nonemergency situations be made up—and a sick child isn't considered an emergency.

I was interested to find out the other day that the center we have Allison and Tyler in was the first center in Connecticut to be based within an industrial park, and also that Senator Dodd was present at the grand opening, with all of five children enrolled at the time. It is nice to know that we have your support here in the Senate.

A lot of times, children are easy to overlook because whoever is yelling the loudest gets the attention, and they can't speak up for themselves.

Selecting day care for Allison, and again when Tyler was born, wasn't easy for us. We were looking at the time that day care providers spend with them, and they spend over 50 hours a week, most of that their waking time.

We have a couple of hours in the evening, and hour in the morning, and we have weekends. We needed to be sure that they were in a caring environment, the same type of environment that we would want them to have if we were able to stay home.

One important consideration we had in selecting the specific day care where we have our kids is that the employee turnover be low so there is some consistency in the day care provider. In order to minimize that staff turnover, the center needs to provide higher salaries, competitive benefits. It results in a better environment for the kids, but it also adds to the cost of that care.

When we had just Allison in day care, the day care expense was a manageable part of our budget. But doubling the expense when Tyler came along caused us to start looking around at other alternatives that we might have. But we looked around, and between 15 and 20 local area centers and home settings, none of those could provide the care and the peace of mind that we got from where our kids were.

We chose to spend the money on quality day care instead of getting our own home, instead of starting a college fund right now. We wanted something more than just basic child care.

We have seen Allison come home, developing friendships, talking about her friends, and she talks about the teachers as if they were her friends, her play buddies. And that is important to us, that she sees the same adults day in and day out, and she can identify with them, she can feel comfortable with them—we feel comfortable with them, and we can go to work feeling comfortable.

But again, it costs a lot of money. Currently it costs us over \$1,100 a month to have Allison and Tyler in day care—28 percent of our net income. That figure is just for services. It doesn't include lunches while they are there, it doesn't include diapers while they are there. Thank God, Allison is almost out of them.

The cost of day care, the cost of housing—student loans between Regina and me are in excess of \$20,000; the cost of gasoline just to get back and forth to work—I don't know how many people are familiar with the geography of Connecticut, but we live about half-way between Hartford and New Haven, and I work about 10 minutes north of Hartford, so I drive 35-40 minutes, and my wife half an hour. It is not a long drive, but as gas prices go up and down it takes a chunk.

Because of all these things, we didn't have the option available to us to start saving for a down payment on a house or a college fund. But there are a few things that we would have liked to have the option of doing. Regina took 6 weeks full-time, 4 weeks part-time off when Tyler was born. The 6 weeks was her paid vacation and compensation time she had earned, and the 4 weeks she was paid at part-time. She wanted to take more time off at that time to be with Tyler, but financially it was impossible; she did not have that option. I took a week and a half off to help out at home. It wasn't enough. I wanted to be there more, take more time off because there was a big transition there. I didn't have that option. Financially, it was impossible for me to take more time. Our parents' generation for the most part had only one working parent. They had the time. One of the parents had the time to be home. They had that option. For us, it was impossible.

In another week, Regina and I are going on our first vacation in over 3 years. We are not taking Allison and Tyler; they are staying with my parents and friends. We decided we needed that time

alone together to make our marriage stronger and therefore our family stronger, to give the support that our kids need at home.

We don't have the opportunity to get out a lot together because we need to work. We don't have as much time together with the kids during the week, so we devote our evenings and our weekends to them. By the time Allison is asleep and the house is cleaned up, we're both ready to go to sleep ourselves. We came to the conclusion about a week ago that it wasn't worth renting a videotape down at the video store anymore because we fell asleep before we had a chance to watch it.

The other night, we sat down to watch a television program. It was 9:15, and everything was finally done for the evening. We looked at each other, and we looked at the clock, and we decided we might make it until about 9:30, and about 9:45 I think is the limit that I had that night.

But our children are happy; they are healthy. We can afford to pay for the quality care that we want for our kids. We make sacrifices to do that, but there is no doubt in our minds that the quality day care is worth the financial burden.

But quality day care shouldn't have to be an option. We shouldn't have to opt to pay for the extreme expense of quality day care and not to be able to save for other things that are of importance like a home, a college education for our children.

It is getting more and more difficult to pay for that, it is getting more and more difficult to save for that for someone in our situation.

And when it comes time for Allison or Tyler to go to work when they are older, and leave one of our grandchildren at a day care center, we want to know that they will be able to put some money away for their future, that they will be able to save some money for their kids' college education. Just like my parents and Regina's, I guess we want something better for our children.

Thank you.

Senator DODD. Very good. Thank you very much, Jim.

Kathleen, thank you for being here.

Ms. SCOFIELD. Thanks for inviting me.

My name is Kathleen Scofield, and I am the proud mother of three boys, and a participant in The Family Place in Baltimore, MD.

I was referred to The Family Place because I was in need of a family support center because I am a single parent. Before I came to The Family Place I used to just stay home, watch TV, and wait until something exciting happened in my life because I didn't really have anything to do.

Now, since I have been going to The Family Place, the center has meant a great deal to me. They taught my three children how to interact with other children; they are preparing them to go to school, and they are teaching them how to be independent so they won't need me all the time.

And they help me in making difficult decisions with low-income housing and for me to become independent from the system, which means counseling me and helping me find a job.

I have been at The Family Place for 9 months, and since then I have been the editor of the newsletter, I have been a spokesperson

for the participants of The Family Place, and I have been talking to other young mothers who are now attending The Family Place.

My hopes for the future are to really have faith in the Lord and myself, to get a good-paying job, to raise my children correctly, and to help them get a better education, which will help them to have a better life ahead. With The Family Place and my family supporting me, I can fulfill my future as well as my children's.

In closing, I think the government should give money to programs like these because they help young parents. They also especially help young mothers, since the mothers are the ones raising the children. Programs like The Family Place help young mothers with low-income housing, educational opportunities, child abuse, drug awareness, support groups like teen groups and prenatal groups if the parents need it, counseling for jobs, housing and their future.

If the government cuts these programs, I believe the world for tomorrow and its children will really be in jeopardy, and young parents would have no place to go.

That's basically all I have to say. Thank you.

Senator DODD. Thank you very much, Kathleen.

Will you introduce the young woman who is with you?

Ms. SCOFIELD. I'm sorry—this is Ms. Theresa Thomas. She is an advisor at The Family Place. And this is my 3 year-old son, Ernie.

Senator DODD. Ernie is a handsome-looking guy. We're glad you brought him with you this morning.

Let me ask both of you—I'll start with you, Jim and Regina—what do you think makes a family strong in your case? You heard witnesses before you who talked about economic opportunities and so forth, you heard Mr. Zill talk about values and so forth that are important.

In your view, what do you think makes it happen—or not happen, I guess.

Mr. LONES. In thinking about my testimony this morning, I came across a couple things. I was thinking about what it was like when I was growing up, which wasn't very long ago, 10, 15 years ago. The neighborhood that I lived in had a sense of community, a sense of caring for each other. There was support from all around to make a family strong. There was just a support structure that was outside of the immediate family, but still local to the family, which was the neighborhood, the neighbors. There was a consistency in the environment that I had. There weren't a lot of people moving in and out. The kids I went to first grade with, I grew up with, I graduated high school with. There was a smooth transition from being at home to being at school. I think consistency is the main thing.

Senator DODD. That is an interesting observation. I recall that myself in my neighborhood growing up. There was one father who could play baseball, and someone else did something else. It was all part of a family.

In your case, Kathleen, you are a single mother raising children. How would you answer that question? What would you like to see happen? What do you think would make a difference in terms of strong families and ties? Jim just mentioned the consistency of the neighborhood, the predictability, the lack of turnover, a structure

that goes beyond just agencies, with other people around. What would be your comments on that?

Ms. SCOFIELD. Basically, really what he said about the community; everybody in the community stick together and help support one another. If one family is in trouble, then the rest of the community ought to have a little meeting and try to help the family that is in trouble and see how they can bond together, basically.

Senator DODD. Did you get a high school degree?

Ms. SCOFIELD. I graduated from high school, yes.

Senator DODD. And are you looking forward to going on to school, are you in the process of doing that?

Ms. SCOFIELD. At The Family Place, they helped to get me into a training program which I just recently graduated from for customer service representative.

Senator DODD. Good.

Ms. SCOFIELD. So basically now I'm trying to find a job.

Senator DODD. Terrific. And your involvement with the community—The Family Place has obviously, by your own testimony here this morning, done a great deal for you—is it your intention to try and continue your relationship there even as you move on, to be involved there as well?

Ms. SCOFIELD. Right. Like I say, I was the editor of the newsletter, and I had to give that up because I was going to the training program. But I still contribute and make phone calls and try to keep up with what is happening there.

Senator DODD. I hope you do. I think it is so important. You have fortunately had a very good experience there.

Ms. SCOFIELD. Yes, I'm still talking to young mothers.

Senator DODD. That's great. I'm glad to hear you are doing that. How about work and child care? How old is Ernie?

Ms. SCOFIELD. He is two.

Senator DODD. You'll have to have some sort of a child care program now that you've had the job training.

Ms. SCOFIELD. My other two children, who are not here today, are in the day care center. And if I get a job, they'll continue to stay in day care, and I will have to find somebody in my family to keep an eye on Ernie.

Senator DODD. How much does child care cost you—do you mind me asking?

Ms. SCOFIELD. Well, today, social services is paying for it, and when I find a job I'll have to start paying for it myself, which is \$45 per week per child.

Senator DODD. That is less expensive than what the Lones are paying. I know which program you are in. That is a distance. How far is that program from where you are in?

Mr. LONES. Actually, from Meriden it takes us only about 5 or 10 minutes to get there.

Senator DODD. All right. Well, you are tremendous.

You have identified very clearly, Kathleen, what your hopes are for your own children; and you, Jim and Regina, have as well for your two children. The pressures on you are pretty significant, but I sense with both families here—very different families in the sense that you, Kathleen, are doing this alone although with help from the outside, and you have got each other and your two chil-

dren and grandparents and so forth—I gather there are some grandparents involved with Ernie and his two brothers—is it two brothers?

Ms. SCOFIELD. Right. I have three boys, ages 2, 3, and 4.

Senator DODD. I'll tell you, they're going to take good care of their mother as the years go by. Well, you've got a lot of strength, and I think that is the essence in many ways; if you've got strength and character, you can survive some tough times if other people help. Whenever I hear people say, "I lifted myself up by my bootstraps; I did it all on my own"—I have never yet met a person where that has been the case. There was always someone, someone there who made a difference in people's lives, someone who picked them up when they fell down and had some faith in them and believed in them. You heard it all the time—when someone gets up and receives an award, they are always thanking a grandparent or a parent or someone, because everyone recognizes that there was someone there who made a difference.

I wish you all well, and I really do thank you for coming. It is always a little awkward to talk about your personal experiences in a public setting, but it helps us to formulate ideas and policies that we hope will make a difference for people.

So we thank you very much for coming down and bringing these little characters with you, the "farm team" as Lawton Chiles called it, "America's farm team". And from the looks of these three, the farm team isn't bad.

Thank you all very much. This subcommittee will stand adjourned until tomorrow morning when we'll continue the hearings.

[Whereupon, at 12:43 p.m., the subcommittee was adjourned.]



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